

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM ALL AT THE DIARY

Fire chief's threat

By CLIFF GREEN and CLINTON GRYBAS

Brigades may refuse to enter 'extreme fire risk' streets

Warrandyte's fire brigades may not enter some local streets this summer if there is a major wildfire.

Community Fireguard Facilitator Steve Pascoe said the brigades will not provide individual property protection and has pleaded with local residents to do their own fire prevention.

"In the event of a major wildfire the local volunteer brigades will consider not entering some streets in Warrandyte and North Warrandyte because they have been identified as extreme fire risk areas," he told the *Diary*.

"This takes into account factors such as high fuel loads, narrow streets, poor water supply and often residents who have lit-

tle understanding of their bushfire risk and how to reduce it."

He identified Webb Street, Whipstick Gully, Gold Memorial Road, Wattle Blossom Road and Pound Road south of the Yarra as roads the brigade may refuse to enter.

North of the river Weerona Way, The Boulevard, Valias Street, Osborne Road, Blooms Road and Castle Road have all been identified as areas of very high bushfire risk. Numerous other streets have been labelled as having an equal—or even a

greater—fire risk hazard which may also result in brigades refusing to enter.

"It is vital that all residents take responsibility for their own fire safety by adopting personal, family and community wildfire survival strategies," Mr Pascoe said. "The CFA, through the Community Fireguard program, offers assistance to residents in developing these plans based on the latest fire survival information."

The fireguard groups are provided with a trained facilitator to dissect the information and

develop plans relevant to the area. Fireguard groups can be organised through the CFA Yarra Area office by phoning 9735 0511.

The annual threat of fire which confronts Warrandyte each summer will be no different this year. Fire brigade captains are warning weather conditions indicate it could be a bad fire season.

North Warrandyte captain Paul Buck fears that a long hot spell over summer could cause chaos in overgrown areas.

"With the heavy rains over the winter, combined with the re-

cent warm weather, the amount of growth in the area is the heaviest it has been for many years," he said.

"If there are long spells of hot weather over the summer period this growth will dry out very quickly. If there is a fire that gets out of control it will burn very easily," he told the *Diary*. "The best advice for residents is to make sure that this growth is removed, especially from around the house."

The last major fire in Warrandyte was in 1991 when a large area of Pound Bend and parts of North Warrandyte near Bradleys Lane and Browns Road were burned out.

Only the swift action of CFA brigade volunteers and State Park firefighters prevented the destruction of the entire area, including Warrandyte township.



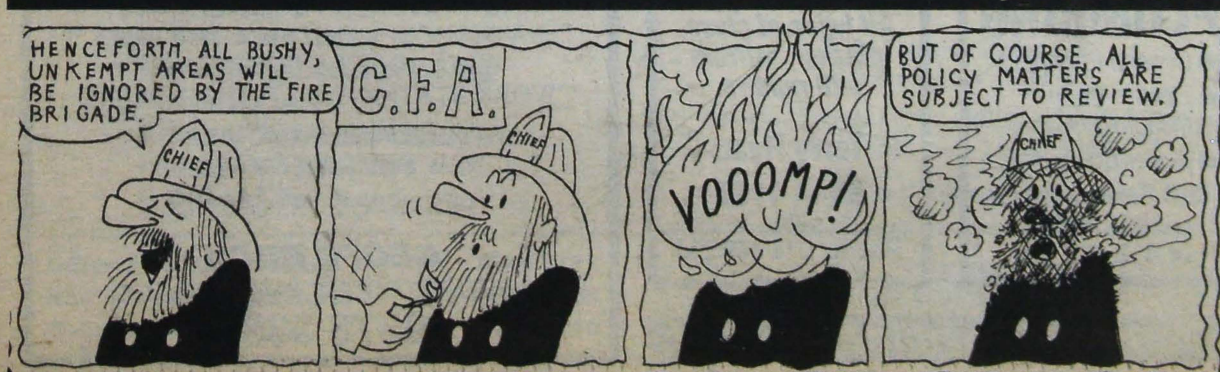
Peter Lovett dies

One of the *Diary's* founding editors, Peter Lovett, died on Sunday, December 1 aged 68. Peter, who left Warrandyte 17 years ago, was well-known in the local area. Formerly editor of *The Echo*, Geelong's regional weekly, Peter was regarded as one of Australian journalism's unique characters. The *Diary* will publish a full tribute next issue.

IN CASE OF FIRE CALL-000-ALL AREAS

CYRIL

By PAUL WILLIAMS




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'Roadside preacher' will sign off soon

For about 20 years now, we have been preached at, challenged and amused by the signboard outside the Gospel Chapel in Yarra Street. It is the best-known sign in Warrandyte but, alas, its days are now numbered. The Chapel is expected to be sold soon to be used as something other than a church and the sign will have to go. We'd often wondered who was responsible for all those profound and Godly messages it has conveyed. Now, thanks to David Dawson, of the Warrandyte Community Church (formerly the Chapel), we know. Ed Bentley, a retired commercial artist, has made the "roadside pulpit" his labour of love for the past 10 years. Ed is a remarkable character, a Christian who loves to share his faith with others. Although his "three score years and 10" are well behind him now, he still puts his considerable talents to use as an artist at the headquarters of the Wycliffe Bible Translators at Kangaroo Ground. He has served that group in an honorary capacity for 26 years. And you'll find him every Sunday morning playing his beloved violin in our Community Church band, his wife Laurel in the congregation.

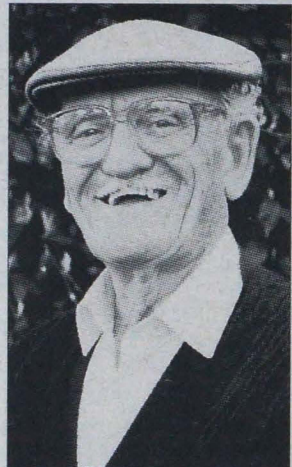
Sydney-born Ed served just about the duration of World War II in an army unit which was roughly the equivalent of television's M*A*S*H outfit, based at Cape York and in New Guinea. Peace restored, he was for 17 years a welfare officer with EVERYMAN'S, an organisation assisting soldiers. His work took him to army camps and barracks in New South Wales and Victoria and during one visit he and a colleague were very nearly wiped out when their jeep strayed on to a firing range. The camouflaged big guns were using live shells and only a misfire saved their lives. Someone, it seemed, was looking after the "Jesus Men" that day.

No names here because although this is the season of goodwill, forgiving and all that, we're not at all sure the lady would ever forgive her hubby or us for identifying her. We'll just tell you that they're Warrandyte Tennis Club members now living in Eltham, that she'd been nagging him for a new double bed and eventually used the ultimate weapon to break down his resistance. So he sought out a mate in the furniture trade. "Her Indoors says no more sex until she gets a new bed," he confided. The mate said that being the case, they'd better treat the sale as one of the utmost urgency. "Actually," said the Eltham bloke, "I'm thinking of putting it on lay-by for 12 months."

We always understood that if a supermarket stuffed up the pricing of an item of stock and you stumbled across a veritable bargain, then that was your good fortune and their stiff luck and they were obliged to wear

IN RED & WHITE

The Gospel Chapel signboard's Christmas message and artist Ed Bentley, who made the Warrandyte landmark his labour of love.

precisely that amount on a paperback. Unfortunately, the book turned out to be second-hand (it had someone else's name on it) and the pages were falling out. Which meant it had been neither Richard's nor Robyn's night at the Crown.

As this edition of the Diary was going to press, two young Warrandyte sportsmen were doing their all for Victoria in a major event on the other side of the continent. Thomas Fricker, of Warrandyte Primary School, and local high school student Jeremy Coates were among 380 Victorian athletes at the fifth Pacific School Games, involving all Australian states and territories and countries as far afield as the United States, Canada, China, South Africa and New Zealand. The events are athletics, swimming, diving and gymnastics, with a section for swimmers with disabilities. We know all this because we got a letter from Denise Fricker, who described herself as a very proud mum—and very rightly so, we think.

It is Sunday afternoon, your columnist's deadline, and outside the Diary office two little girls are playing Christmas carols, one on a violin, the other on a viola. It is by no means pure, sweet music, but God bless 'em for doing their bit for the Christmas spirit. All of which is a sneaky cue for Smokey to sign off for 1996, wish you all the type of Christmas and New Year you'd wish upon yourselves and beg you to not only do in your buddies, neighbours, spouses and casual acquaintances in 1997 but tell your mates to do it too. Bye now.

Well, that's not the way it happened to a Warrandyte shopper at The Pines when she objected to paying \$2.95 for a simple small plastic bucket that had been priced at 95 cents. When the check-out girl sent a scout to the bucket department to investigate, it was established that the \$2.95 product had been put on the wrong shelf. There was no suggestion that the supermarket would let this bucket go for 95 cents, but that didn't particularly worry our shopper, who said they could keep it, thank you very much. What she didn't tell them was that the packet of meat that had gone through the check-out as ox tongue (worth something like \$1.50 a kilo) was in fact pickled pork (worth something like \$6 a kilo). Some you win, some you lose.

Richard Aumann is not a gambling man and was a somewhat reluctant member of a Warrandyte Tennis Club party pursuing instant wealth at the Crown Casino. Wife Robyn, on the other hand, is not at all averse to a flutter on the pokies. So while she was pumping the housekeeping into the infernal machines, Richard repaired to the in-house bookshop and bought himself an uplifting volume. Comparing notes later, they discovered that Robyn had lost \$19 and Richard had spent



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Schools' hopes are high

By FIA CLENDINEN

Warrandyte schools are looking ahead with confidence and do not expect to merge in the near future.

This was the message given to the *Diary* by principals and school council presidents at Warrandyte Primary School, Andersons Creek Primary School, Kangaroo Ground Primary School and Warrandyte High School.

The news follows the state government announcement that primary schools with student enrolments of

—following an uncertain year

less than 175 and high schools of less than 400 should "consider their future," in other words, to look at merging with nearby schools.

But Jon Richards, spokesperson for the Minister of Education, said the decision would ultimately rest with the individual schools. "We categorically deny that there will be any forced closures. We will still support any school

if they don't merge."

President of the Victorian branch of the Australian Education Union, Peter Lord, is confident the decision will not be taken out of the hands of schools. "At the end of the day the school community does have the choice to keep their school open," he said. "The school can survive, absolutely."

But Mr Lord was critical of the timing of the announcement of the restructure program. "The timing of this, so late in the year, is deliberate. Now is just when schools are considering late enrolments," he said.

Some teachers strongly defended smaller schools in the face of the Education Department's "bigger is better" attitude. A spokesperson for the Minister of Education told the *Diary*: "Kids could be getting a better education at a larger school. At a small school they're getting an education, but we want to make it better. A bigger school offers more subjects and better resources. It offers a broader curriculum."

But Michael Blake, principal of Warrandyte High School which has 480 enrolments for next year, disagrees. "I can see a lot of great value in smaller schools. 'Quality not quantity' is a statement of the school; we'll stand by that," he said.

"I know that parents specifically send their children here because it is a smaller school. We get parents who have pulled their child out of a larger school; they say 'no one at the school knows my child'."

Mr Blake said he and his staff are very

confident about what they are doing. "When you get down to a small number of students you can have problems with resources but we've been able to resource the school very well. The state government's current round of re-structuring doesn't effect us at all. I like to think this is due to the school's record, which is outstanding."

Kangaroo Ground Primary School is another small school, with 74 enrolments. School council president John Cain said this provided similar benefits to those experienced at the high school.

"I'm thrilled at the way the school is going. We've got computers, we've got the internet. I don't think the children are losing by being at a small school, quite the opposite," he said.

"Our school offers an educational system where children don't get lost. We have everybody helping across all ages. Our school is a nice friendly country school right on the fringe of suburbia. Our school has the total support of the parents and teachers."

Teachers and parents also defended the rights of parents to be able to choose which schools they send their children to. Des McKenzie, principal at Andersons Creek Primary School which boasts an enrolment of 360, said parents have excellent options available to them.

"I would never deny anyone the right to send their kids to a small school. I'm a parent myself, I was always keen to choose what schools my kids went to," he said.

"But there are a lot of parents who want information technology, specialist teachers, LOTE (Languages Other Than English), art and craft rooms and after-school programs. For all that you need a critical mass. If you look at what schools have to deliver these days it's quite extraordinary."

Some parents feel that in the re-structuring program too much emphasis is placed on economics and the central issue has been missed.

"We're all there ultimately for one aim: to educate children. That's what everybody keeps forgetting," said Deborah Patelejenko, school council president at Briar Hill Primary School, situated between Greensborough and Eltham.

"Small and big schools must work together. As tax-payers we should have that choice, whether we send our kids to a big or small school."

Briar Hill Primary School, with an enrolment of 158, was targeted for re-structure in late October. At a meeting attended by more than 90 percent of the school's parents the school community voted unanimously to remain open. The school council has endorsed that vote.

"We did this all for the good of the kids," Ms Patelejenko told the *Diary*. "It means a lot to me. If the Department of Education just saw the school, they would understand why we feel so passionate about it."

Ken Wing Jan, principal of Warrandyte Primary School with more than 350 enrolments, has no doubts as to his school's future.

"We've got everything Mr Gude (Minister for Education) says a good school should have. This school will outlast me, it will outlast my grandchildren," he said.



Santa's helpers: Kangaroo Ground kids enjoying their primary school's carnival earlier this month.

Vandalism fears drop

By CLINTON GRYPAS

Warrandyte police are speaking to several local youths whose names have been forwarded in response to last month's *Diary* story on the increased level of local vandalism.

Sergeant Keith Walker told the *Diary* he was delighted with the response to the report and said that vandalism at Warrandyte Community Centre had ceased in the last month.

"We have had a lot of feedback in relation to the article and are conducting an inquiry as a result of the information put forward."

"We are speaking to several youths whose names have been given to us for being involved in some very irresponsible behaviour. Some parents and kids have obviously had enough and have made statements to the police in regard to this," he said.

One youth was summoned to the police station for a meeting with his parents, the police and a member of the management committee of the Warrandyte

Community Centre.

"It was a productive meeting and as a result word has got back to the other youths who now know their behaviour will simply not be tolerated any longer," Sergeant Walker said.

"Again we want to reinforce that it is only a small handful who are poorly behaved. The majority are very good."

"It's up to the parents to be involved to a greater extent in the leisure time of their children."

He cited the recent fishing day on the Yarra River, promoted by the Rotary Club, as being a key such event.

"There were old and young children, parents and grandparents all having a wonderful time, without having to leave Warrandyte. I'd like to see other community groups put on similar days to give families things to do."

The police have promised to continue their visual patrols around the area over the summer holiday period.

Big promotion for our town

Thirty-six Warrandyte businesses and places to visit are featured in a new Discover Warrandyte Gold tourist brochure, produced by the Warrandyte Business Association.

Local businesses are hoping to attract new visitors from across the state as a result of the publication of 45,000 brochures. Virtually all the brochures will be distributed beyond Warrandyte to encourage new visitors to the town.

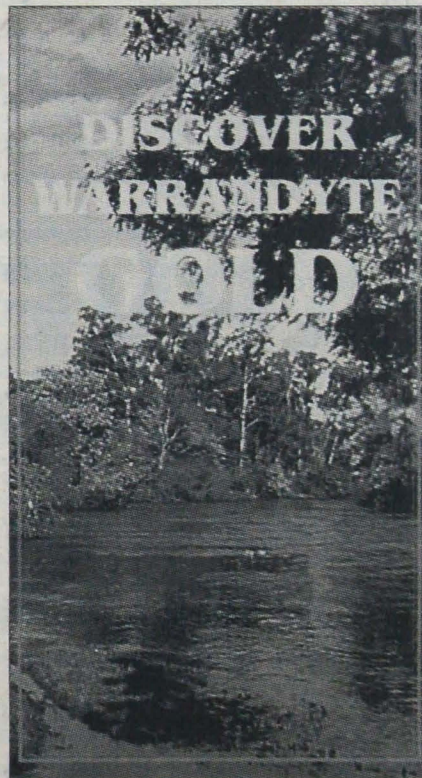
The brochure is divided into three sections featuring places to visit, places to shop and places to eat. It also includes two maps, one showing Warrandyte and its proximity to Melbourne and the other indicating where the 36 locations are in town.

Distribution of the map is via a marketing company to some 160 hotels, motels, the airport and other agencies across the state. These include the Hilton on the Park, Hotel Windsor, RACV and the Public Transport Corporation.

A business association spokesperson said they hoped the brochure would "go a long way to presenting Warrandyte—to share with other people—at its best without changing the character".

Copies of the brochure, supported by Manningham City Council, Warrandyte Business Association and Warrandyte Streetlife, are available from Information Warrandyte, the historical society and the community centre.

The release coincides with a pre-Christmas radio campaign on 3AW highlighting Warrandyte's shops, restaurants, galleries and walks to attract more people to the town.



School security plan

Warrandyte's primary students are asking local residents to keep an eye on their schools over the summer break. The students are involved in a new crime prevention initiative with Warrandyte police.

Senior Constable Kim Dixon told the *Diary* students from Andersons Creek, Warrandyte, Wonga Park and Park Orchards primary schools had embraced the School Watch program.

"Grade 5 and 6 students at the schools have been designing Christmas cards with standard messages inside to be delivered to all homes near their school."

"The messages tell the residents that the students will be on holidays and ask them to keep an eye on the school and report any suspicious happenings to police," she said.

Snr Constable Dixon said the students would hand deliver the cards to local homes accompanied by police.

"It's a great initiative and really helps the students look after and care about their school," Snr Constable Dixon said.

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Vandalism: local kids have their say

The youth of Warrandyte would like to make a complaint about what you published in the last *Warrandyte Diary*, number 282, November 1996.

For starters we really don't like the heading 'Local kids run wild'. All that says about us is that nobody can control us, but yet they can. It makes us sound like we run around destroying everything that comes into sight, but yet we are not like that.

Most of the things you said about us happened about one year ago, and most of the people who use the

drop-in centre now didn't even come into Warrandyte back then.

Who is to say that the youth of Warrandyte put glass in the sandpit, urine in the sandpit or even broke into the neighbourhood house. Just because these facilities are close to the drop-in centre doesn't mean we did it. For all you know it could have been drunk people coming back from the pub or even people from other towns. I'm sure the people who did these things are truly sorry but cannot prove that it was done by the youth of Warrandyte.

dyte.

In the article you made the drop-in centre sound like it's a place for drunks and druggies to hang out, but none of us are like that.

The drop-in centre has done a lot of good things in the past and I'm sure it will in the future. For example it's a free recreational place for the youth to get away from all their problems. It supplies computer games, table tennis, pool, nintendo, TV and an arcade game. This is also a great place to meet new people and make new friends.

If you keep on putting articles like this in the *Diary* eventually no-one's parents will let them come down to the drop-in centre, and the youth really enjoy coming here.

If the drop-in centre was to close down there would be a lot more graffiti and vandalism around Warrandyte.

So if you would like to stop putting us down maybe more people would learn to know the truth about the drop-in centre and that it's not a bad place for their children to come to. I hope you take this letter seriously

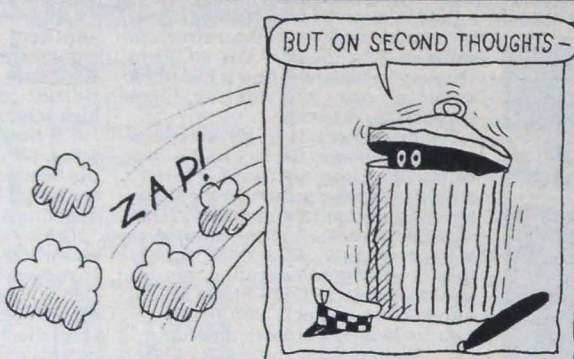
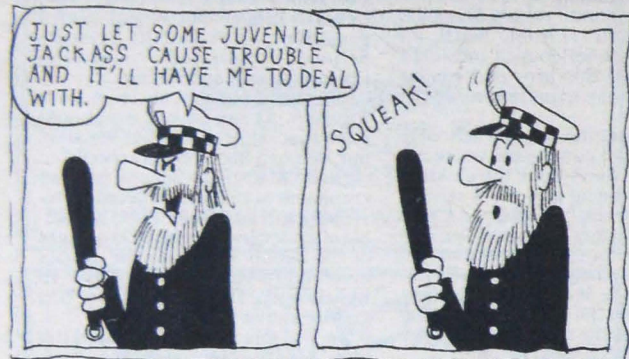
and think about what we have said, because we took what you wrote about us seriously, I think it's time for someone to take us seriously.

Nellie Hodgson and Siobhan Russell
Youth Committee,
Warrandyte Youth Services

● The Diary report consisted entirely of comments made by Warrandyte police, community centre management and the co-ordinator of Warrandyte Youth Services.

CYRIL

By PAUL WILLIAMS



Cartoon character cops out

DEAR DIARY

I wish to state that I felt the cartoon by Paul Williams, *Diary* 282, was in very poor taste and most irresponsible.

It completely destroys the fabric of the lead article regarding the outrageous behaviour of some youths at the community centre.

Last month's offending cartoon

Obviously the police have had enough and are in need of community support, not ridicule.

The police of Warrandyte do a fantastic job. A good motto would be "Support them. Don't deride".

Catherine Bennett
Ringwood North

Hungry developers move on Eltham

I write in reference to the development of the site of the demolished Shire Office in Main Road, Eltham.

Perhaps many residents are unaware that the site was zoned 'commercial' by the elected councillors who probably never thought that the shire offices would ever be demolished.

The zoning also includes the War Memorial land. The proposal to build a petrol station, Hungry Jacks restaurant and shops on the site can only be classified as unsuitable.

The extra traffic created by this project will create a dangerous situation on the already overloaded Main Road. Try and imagine—traffic banked up at Bridge Street

lights, perhaps some time in the near future a round-about at Panther Place, lights at Dudley Street, pedestrian lights at the post office and possible lights at Diamond Street to cater for the traffic from the railway car park which has been moved to Diamond Street. If all this comes to pass it will all be due to the granting of a permit for the development of the aforementioned site.

I believe the local traders are the ones to suffer—who can blame people shopping elsewhere in a situation like this. All in all this project if developed could sound the 'death knell' for Eltham.

Frank Burgoyne
Eltham

Vote of approval for tourist development

I would like to congratulate the Stonehouse people on the extension to their building. This must be the best commercial building erected in Warrandyte for many years.

It complements the old historic Selby Store (Stonehouse pottery) it adjoins perfectly. This sensitive extension contrasts to the other extension in the township which has destroyed the historic building it adjoins. It shows what can be done if the owners care enough. Well done.

There has been some controversy for and against visitors to Warrandyte lately. We who live here value our environment, the mixture of fine arts and crafts and interesting eating places, but how many of you buy from these shops. Certainly not

enough for the traders to make a living.

If they do not have the visitors to patronise them the shops will shut and a vital part of our artistic heritage will be lost—and the town would be very dull.

Warrandyte has always been a tourist town right from the early days when charabancs full of picnickers came for the day on the river or to stay at the guest houses. Don't knock the tourists, they are necessary for the village to thrive. It's crowded at the weekends but week days there are very few buying from the shops. How about trying Warrandyte for your Christmas shopping first before going to Eastland etc.

Shirley Rotherham
Tills Drive



More tourists could equal fewer closed shops

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Festival show funding disappoints

By CLINTON GRYPAS

Warrandyte Festival Committee's ambitious Albeda Acoustica project for the 1997 festival is in doubt following several refusals to funding applications.

Despite a \$10,000 grant from the state government as part of the Arts Development Program, the committee has drawn a blank from their other proposals, leaving the \$45,000 project in jeopardy.

"We're a bit nervous about getting the money now," festival committee president John Boyle told the *Diary*. "It's a huge project that takes an enormous amount of work and we've found the funding authorities have not been very helpful."

He has been particularly disappointed by the federal government's flat rejection of any funding, citing the example of a similar project in Canberra recently which "had heaps of money thrown at it but attracted not even half the people we would get next year".

The idea for the Albeda Acoustica project was inspired by the successful sound and light show in the old dairy paddock which attracted 3000 people during the 1993 festival.

The new show would use the "curtain of evening" to present a kaleido-

scopic experience of sound and light reflected along a 500 metre section of riverbank on the North Warrandyte side west of the bridge (from near the bridge to opposite Whipstick Gully). A series of lights would bounce across the river to the opposite bank, highlighting various trees, cliffs, the water and other items in a shimmering array of colours as people walk past.

The walk would be accompanied by a stirring 30 minute music score from well-known local composer Barry McKimm, who is a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The sounds would reflect the moods of Warrandyte in a variety of ways. Woven through the piece would be the sounds of Warrandyte, recorded in high quality digital stereo by specialist sound production engineer Brian Laurence.

Tony Shepherd, Jock Macneish, Trevor Thornton and Rohan Thornton, a lighting director at Channel 9, were also going to be involved.

Mr Boyle says the walk, to last for six hours over two nights, would be free for several thousand festivalgoers, providing people of all ages with a unique experience.

"We're still hopeful of getting the funding for it but so far we have met with an

ordinary response. This is despite the community's tremendous and continuing involvement in the festival.

"Last year our parade had more entrants in it than the Moomba parade and enjoyed 10 times as much enthusiasm and spirit. But their budget is \$1 million while ours is just \$10,000," he said.

Warrandyte MP, Phil Honeywood, who announced the \$10,000 state government grant last month, said he was hopeful the project would still go ahead.

"I know that the festival committee has put a lot of hard work into the preparation of this project which will be a major attraction at the festival in 1997."

He said the state money was part of a program which directed "grants ranging from \$5000 to \$50,000 towards performing arts, visual arts, literature projects, heritage exhibitions and festivals to meet the Arts 21 programming objective".

Mr Boyle said the festival committee was very fortunate to have on hand many people willing to donate their time and expertise for the festival.

More volunteers are still required for the festival, to be held on the weekend of March 22 and 23. To do so, or to donate money for the Albeda Acoustica project, phone Marilyn Parsons on 9844 1175.



Jock's logo for the 1997 festival

Top sports fight drugs

Some of the big names in AFL football linked with other leading sportsmen last month to promote drug and alcohol awareness at Warrandyte High School.

Nathan Buckley, Ang Christou, John Platten and former student Jon Hassall joined NBL basketball Paul Maley, Olympic high jump bronze medalist Tim Forsyth and corporate fitness trainer and former teacher Mark McKeon for a celebrity basketball match at the school.

High school welfare coordinator Greg Stewart said he was delighted with the response to the game.

"The atmosphere of the event was electric. The whole school crammed into the gym to cheer on the students and celebrities alike," he said. The celebrities played on teams with 25 students who were rotated throughout the match.

"Tim Forsyth seemed to set a new Olympic high jump record with his slam-dunking while the AFL stars fought it out as though there was a premiership at stake."

After the match the celebrities spoke to the students about the dangers of drugs, cigarettes and alcohol, which was the key message for the week.

"We had the Quit information van in the school yard for two days," Mr Stewart said. "This



Nathan Buckley

gave the students valuable information relating to cigarette smoking and was accessed by around 350 students.

"One of Victoria's 13 booze buses was also made available. Hundreds of students inspected it and were 'breathalysed' by Senior Constable Peter Abbey of the Traffic and Alcohol Division."

Manningham Youth Services development and outreach workers worked with all Year 7 to 10 students in class during the week while a Drug Harm information evening for parents was also held.

Mr Stewart described the week, which was part of a larger Drug Harm Awareness Program that the school is seeking to implement, as a great success.

New court hopes

By CLINTON GRYPAS

Warrandyte Basketball Club is inching closer to a new two-court stadium to be built at Andersons Creek Primary School, while Warrandyte Tennis Club seems likely to get one, not two, new courts at Warrandyte Reserve as the push for improved facilities for local sportspeople continues.

The basketball club's five year wait on news of a new stadium could end as soon as Friday, December 13, when council will release news of a consultant's report on highball stadiums in the municipality.

The report, which was due out in September, seems certain to recommend a new stadium be built in either Warrandyte or Park Orchards.

"It seems to be closer now than it has ever been," Warrandyte Basketball Club president Bruce Macdonald told the *Diary*. "We're obviously thrilled to be finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel along what has been a very long road for us."

"It really has been taken out of our hands completely now. We've stated our case and presented proposals and facts numerous times.

"We're just waiting with bated breath as to what the outcome will be."

The club has been given support from local MP, Phil Honeywood, who is believed to be formulating a fall-back option should the club not receive the expected good news in the consultant's report.

A two-court basketball stadium at a recently closed school elsewhere in the municipality

Clubs waiting on final decisions

has apparently come to the attention of Mr Honeywood, and the *Diary* believes he is looking at having the stadium dismantled and moved to Andersons Creek Primary School where it would be re-assembled.

"We're delighted that Mr Honeywood has picked up the baton and is going into battle for us," Mr Macdonald said. "People have been talking to him and he is aware of our problem and is acting on our behalf."

The Andersons Creek site seems certain to be the one put forward in the facilities recommendation report produced by council-appointed consultant Ken Marriott.

"It seems as though everyone has been around here looking at the place," said Des McKenzie, principal of Andersons Creek Primary School.

"This is from the consultants to the commissioners and others. There has been a lot of action but nothing is definite yet.

"We are confident of it going ahead. All of the main stakeholders in this, being the school, basketball club, Mr Honeywood, the Manningham commissioners and the local business association, have given me positive indications that this is the preferred site."

He said the idea had virtually the unanimous support of the

school's parents.

"We conducted yet another survey of our parent body here and found that 95 percent of the parents were in favour of a new stadium being built at the school."

Manningham council had not received the consultant's report when the *Diary* went to press. They released a statement saying the report will "assess and consider locations for additional basketball facilities in the municipality including Warrandyte and Park Orchards. Council has also started discussions with the Department of Education on possible locations for basketball facilities in Manningham."

Meanwhile, some criss-crossing sewer pipes mean that Warrandyte Tennis Club is likely to get just one new court, and not the two as originally planned, at Warrandyte Reserve.

Mr Honeywood recently convened a second meeting of club representatives and council officers at the club's courts to go over the site.

"This followed feed-back from the council that two additional—and budgeted for—courts could not be configured onto the current site," Mr Honeywood told the *Diary*.

"An extra two courts would apparently necessitate encroachment onto the river res-

ervation and adjacent sewer pipelines.

"A compromise proposal was put forward at the meeting that, noting the site constraints, only one new court be constructed with any cost savings being put towards upgrading the Lions Club courts in Warrandyte township.

"We expect to have the final decision on this two-year saga soon," he said.

Club president Frank Waites said he was impressed by Mr Honeywood's and council's work on the plan.

"They are working very diligently towards this and we are in constant contact with them.

"There are three options available which we are looking at and exploring."

He said that if the club is to use the two courts at the bridge they would require additional work to get them up to standard.

"These courts would be used as an overflow for us, particularly in the case of our juniors. It is not the ideal outcome for us but we recognise council's stance that there should not be an over-development of Warrandyte Reserve.

"The courts are obviously not getting the care and attention at the moment like those at the reserve and they would need a major rebuilding and commitment by council to take care of them.

"If we could have the guaranteed access of them for our juniors we would certainly want to use them."

He said an extra court is not needed at the bridge, just the upgrading of the existing ones.

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New truck to support North brigade this summer

North Warrandyte Fire Brigade's efforts this summer will be helped following the completion of the new Isuzu twin cab tanker. The tanker replaces the blue Ford which was sold last year.

Funds for the new vehicle were raised by a stall at the Warrandyte Festival, annual donations to the brigade, special fund-raising events and donations from service clubs and the Shire of Nillumbik.

Brigade captain Paul Buck said the new vehicle is one of the most modern in the area and has all the latest equipment on board. "Due to the twin cab arrangement, it is also far safer for fire crews to travel to and from an incident," he said.

Meanwhile, new fire laws have been introduced for burning off in the Shire of Nillumbik this summer.

During the declared fire danger period (when the signs are erected at Warrandyte Bridge) no burning off is



Wonga Park fireman trains budding new recruit (Picture by Sandy Burgoyne)

allowed.

Outside the fire danger period, a permit from the shire is required for burning off on properties of less than one hectare (2.5 acres) while no permit is required on properties of more than one hectare.

More information can be obtained by calling the shire on 9433 3111 or from the shire's fire prevention officer on 9712 0049.

About 2000 fire prevention

notices were issued to Nillumbik Shire residents on December 9, one of the final steps in preparation for the fire season.

Nillumbik's acting Emergency Management Officer, Norm Golgerth, said under the Country Fire Authority Act, landholders are required to comply with a fire prevention notice.

"Most people will respond quickly by ensuring the necessary slashing of long

grass and the removal of other fire hazards," he said.

"But those who fail to comply with the notice will be fined \$200 and sent a bill for the cost of a council-arranged contractor to clean up their property."

He said the grass and bushland areas in Nillumbik Shire are rapidly "curing" and limited time remains for fire fuel reduction activity ahead of the onset of hot weather.

Council denies funds backflip

Manningham City Council's acting chief of commissioners, Hector Davis, has denied that the commissioners rescinded the decision of the former Doncaster councillors to proceed with the development of a retirement hostel in Warrandyte.

Mr Davis was responding to comments made by the Member for Warrandyte, Phil Honeywood, in the November edition of the *Diary* on a proposed retirement village in Warrandyte.

He said the commissioners had made it clear to the Warrandyte Community Retirement Housing Project Committee and Mr Honeywood that council will provide its support for the project if it can be satisfied that the project is viable and a satisfactory proposal can be put together.

"No viable project has yet been submitted and it is for that reason only that the hopes of the committee have not been realised," Mr Davis said.

"If a proposal is presented to council which is economically viable then the council stands ready and willing to provide its full support.

"Council would welcome from Mr Honeywood or the committee a proposal which has community support and is economically viable.

"Even if as Mr Honeywood suggests councillors should be elected who will support local residential options and facilities for Warrandyte and Park Orchards those elected councillors will still be bound to ensure that any proposal stands the test of commercial viability," he said.

'000' will bring help in fire emergency

The method of reporting fires in Warrandyte has changed. Instead of calling the local fire brigade direct when reporting a fire, all calls must now be made to the 000 emergency number.

"As part of the state government's improvements to emergency management in Victoria, all fire calls are now to be made by dialling 000," Paul Buck, captain of the North Warrandyte CFA brigade told the *Diary*.

"The local numbers that have been in use for many years have

now all been diverted to the 000 number and are not to be used.

"When a call is made to 000 the call is taken by operators at the CFA Emergency Centre at East Burwood. They record details of the incident and notify the local brigade by means of a pager system.

"It is expected that response times will not be significantly different under this system."

The brigades soon hope to be distributing new 000 stickers for local residents' phones.

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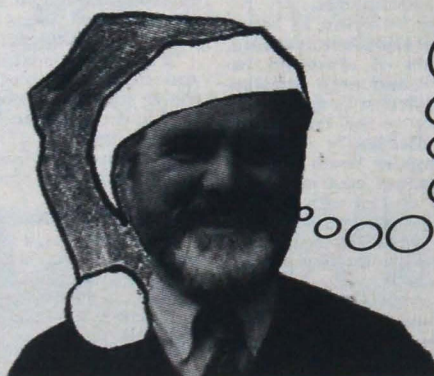


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New ranger welcomed



Andrew Nixon, Warrandyte's new ranger-in-charge (Picture by Jan Tindale)

By MARGARET DIMECH

Warrandyte State Park's new ranger-in-charge says he is delighted with his appointment and is enjoying working in a community with a strong community input and involvement in the running of the park.

Andrew Nixon, who boasts 12 years experience in the National Parks Service, believes his role at the park will present him with a new challenge.

"Although Warrandyte is a small park in size, it is large on issues," he told the *Diary*. "During a period of continual change in the way the community interacts with parks, we must keep in step with government policies."

He says that while there have been some excellent changes he finds that some have "created challenges". In the wake of staff reduction and tight budgets he believes there are tough decisions to make and a need to set priorities.

Mr Nixon's lengthy experience in the National Parks Service gives him a solid background for the new position. For the last 18 months he has been at Marysville managing the Cathedral Range National Park.

Originally trained as a youth worker, his first park job was as a project officer in recreation issues at the Alpine National Park.

"Becoming a ranger was a career move to suit the needs of my family and a choice I haven't regretted," he said.

Of his various postings around Australia and New Zealand his favourite was at Mount Buffalo, where he developed a taste for cross country skiing and bushwalking. He enjoys being physically fit and is a keen bike rider and volleyball player.

In spite of all the hard work that lies in front of him he says he will enjoy the task. He knows that there are many others who would jump at the chance to be able to swap places with him.



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Bunnies hit by bad bugs

Monitoring of the wild rabbit population in Nillumbik Shire began last month following the release of the deadly biological control agent rabbit calicivirus. The release was part of the Victorian government's rabbit control program.

Nillumbik council's environment officer, Tim Bloomfield, said a casual inspection of a few sites showed there was still a considerable infestation of rabbits.

"Council and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will closely monitor rabbit colonies over coming weeks for confirmation that they are being ravaged by rabbit calicivirus disease," he said.

"As the disease spreads throughout the rabbit population we expect to record a rapid decline in the numbers of this serious environmental pest."

In the government's calicivirus program, sites were targeted at Kangaroo Ground South, Mount Lofty, Sugarloaf Reservoir and the Warrandyte area including across the border into the City of Manningham.

Integrated rabbit control measures—the destruction of rabbit harbours, fumigation and poisoning—are being carried out by landholders in recognition that the virus will only kill about 80 percent of the rabbits.

Funding for State Park interpretation reduced

By DAVID WYMAN

A limited nature interpretation program will be offered to the public by Warrandyte State Park this summer—and participants will have to pay a "significant amount" to take part.

The nature education program has been popular in past years, conducted by rangers with a small fee paid by people taking part.

The reduced program in January follows a change in policy of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. It is now encouraging outside groups to run such programs as nature interpretation on a commercial basis.

Warrandyte State Park was unable to get an outside group to run the program even though it offered it to the Friends of Warrandyte State Park at a substantial fee. The Friends de-

clined for "practical and philosophical" reasons.

Because the park failed to get a commercial group to run the interpretation program it will receive no funding for it and plans to run it using its own rangers.

New ranger-in-charge, Andrew Nixon, said the limited program was being offered because of staff shortages and other difficulties. "We will be offering probably four activities—a gold history walk, the annual koala count and survey, a dawn bird walk and an evening spotlight walk," he said.

Park staff numbers were slashed earlier this year with the number of rangers at one stage reduced from six full-time staff to three junior rangers. The construction and maintenance crew was reduced from five members to just two.

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Council puts the bite on dogs

Nillumbik Shire Council has begun a clamp down on dogs wandering at large in North Warrandyte, and on unregistered dogs and cats throughout the municipality.

The search for dogs on the loose follows an incident off Pigeon Bank Road where three dogs—a border collie, a white pointer-type dog with brown spots and a small black dog—harassed a kangaroo, forcing it into a dam.

Council ranger, Vin Molony, said the incident clearly showed that some owners did not know or care what their pet dogs got up to during the night. Rangers were now mounting patrols of the area

looking for any dog wandering at large.

"The message we want to give all dog owners is not to be complacent by giving dogs the opportunity to wander at night and form packs with other dogs," he told the *Diary*.

Owners could face a fine of up to \$1200 and also have their dog declared a dangerous dog.

The shire has begun to take steps to identify owners of unregistered dogs and cats. Council's Peter Bean said that there were only 7000 dogs registered this year compared with about 8000 last year.

"A lot more of the stray dogs

being impounded recently are unregistered," he said. "Regular checks have begun on properties that previously had registered dogs."

Mr Bean said there were 4300 registered cats in Nillumbik but estimates put the feline population at around the 5000 mark. Under the Domestic Animals Act, cats as well as dogs have to be registered with council.

To encourage owners to do the right thing, dogs and cats can be registered for the first time at half the normal price, with the registration lasting until April next year.

DAVID WYMAN

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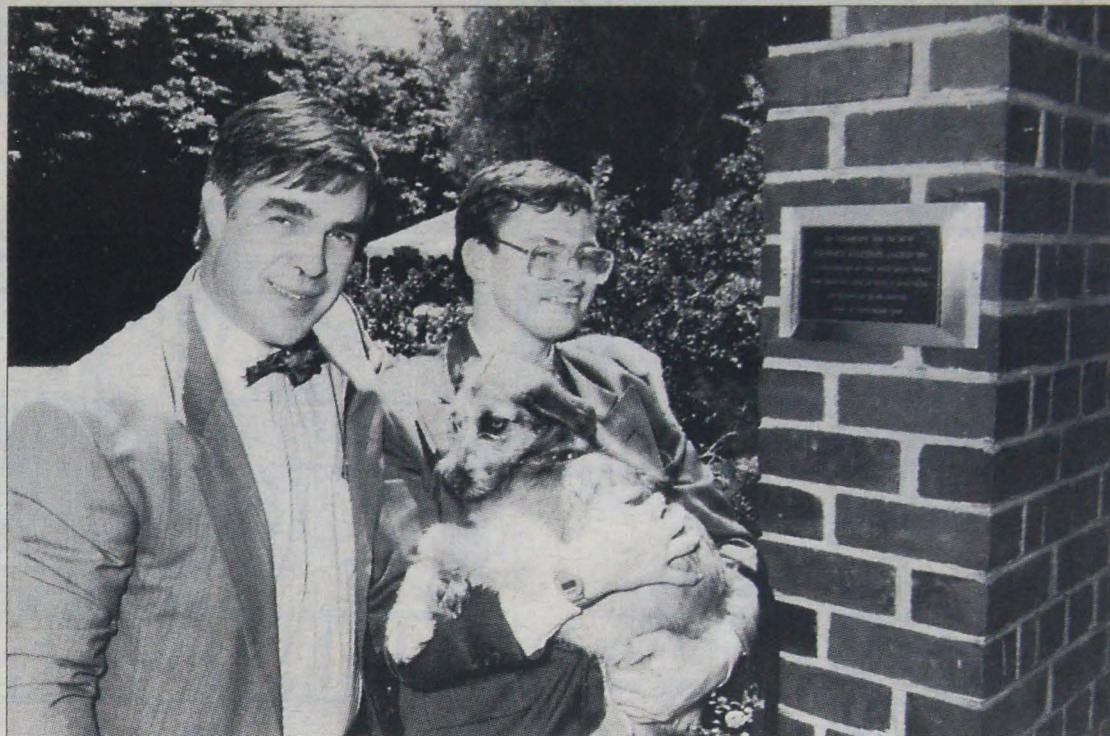
WONGA PARK COMMUNITY FESTIVAL



Pictures by SANDY BURGOYNE

A story of outstanding heroism at Pound Bend, 61 years ago

Death at The Tunnel



North Melbourne Lost Dogs' Home general manager Dr Graeme Smith (left) and historian Paul Street at the rededication of the plaque honouring Robert Capron.



By LEE TINDALE

ACEREMONY late last month at the North Melbourne Lost Dogs' Home has recalled the heroism of three men in a Yarra River flood at Pound Bend more than 60 years ago.

It is the story of a fox terrier pup named Nonie, of American actor Robert Capron, who died trying to save her from the torrent, and of two men who risked their lives trying to save Capron.

The two survivors were Academy Award-winning Australian actor Peter Finch and a Warrandyte identity, the late John Hutchinson.

For almost two hours on September 22, 1935, Finch and Hutchinson dived in the fierce current searching for Capron, who had been swept into and through the Pound Bend Tunnel in a desperate, spontaneous attempt to save his pet.

So strong was the current that a police search for Capron's body had to be suspended for three days until the floodwaters moderated.

The story of the drama had been lost in the passage of time but was revived on November 28 with the rededication of a plaque in Capron's honour at the Lost Dogs' Home.

Capron, 37 and a much-respected international actor/comedian, had been a good friend of the home, a regular visitor there while in Melbourne to co-star with Finch, then 19, in the stage production of "So, This Is Hollywood" at the Apollo Theatre (now the Metro nightclub) in Bourke Street. The two actors became firm friends.

Capron had met Nonie at the Lost Dogs' Home and adopted her.

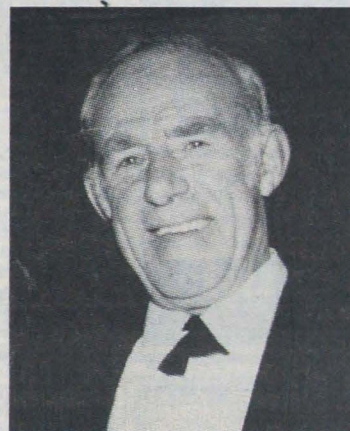
Nonie was eight weeks old when Capron, Finch, fellow cast member Brenda Grey and a couple named Stapleton, who ran the Imperial Hotel, where the cast actors were staying, drove to Warrandyte for a picnic. They arrived at The Tunnel about 4.15pm and watched the awesome floodwaters thundering into its entrance.

No one actually saw Nonie go into the water—but suddenly there she was, at the mercy of the current.

Capron shouted her name and jumped into the river. Finch tried to grab him, but the American was swept into The Tunnel.

Finch ran up the bank to the outlet on the other side, shedding his clothes as he went. There was no sign of his friend when Finch reached the outlet but as he looked downstream he saw Capron struggling feebly against the current, with Nonie on his shoulder.

By the time Finch reached the



John Hutchinson: dived for two hours in the raging Yarra.

water's edge, Capron had disappeared. Finch waded into the water and someone shouted: "There's the dog!"

Nonie had been carried towards the bank. Finch grabbed her and threw her on to the bank.

For the next two hours, Finch and John Hutchinson dived in the treacherous waters for Capron.

Hutchinson was 24 at the time and lived at Pound Bend. There are conflicting versions of how he became involved in the drama.

One is that Finch ran to the house for help. Another is that Hutchinson was already on the scene.

His father is said to have told Finch: "My son is a strong swimmer. He will go in."

Capron's body was found three days later when the easing current allowed police to search the river. It was about 100 yards downstream from The Tunnel, in about 20 feet of water. The actor's neck appeared to

have been broken.

Diary writer Julie Murray is one of four children of the late John and Alma Hutchinson and well remembers her father recounting the events of the late afternoon of September 22, 1935.

"He used to tell us that Peter Finch got into difficulties himself while diving and Dad had to help him ashore," Julie said.

"He also told us that when Capron's body was eventually found it was laid out on Dad's bed because there was nowhere else to put it until transport was arranged to take it back to Melbourne.

"Dad said he didn't know it was there and got a terrible shock when he pulled back the covers to go to bed that night.

"Then again, Dad was not unknown to exaggerate a little when telling a story.

Exaggeration or not, there was no doubt about the bravery of John Hutchinson, who died in 1986, in the Capron incident. Hutchinson and Finch were honoured by the Royal Humane Society for their parts in it.

Capron's bravery in jumping into the raging Yarra to save his dog touched Melbourne's heart. When he was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery, public subscription paid for the headstone—a special headstone with the figure of a dog on it.

A garden plot at the Lost Dogs' Home was dedicated as "Capron's Corner" and a plaque unveiled. At the dedication ceremony, the United States consul planted a Californian pine in the centre of the plot.

In time, Capron's Corner and the plaque disappeared. Thanks to the research and resourcefulness of Melbourne historian Paul Street, a new plaque is now in place and the memory of three heroes lives on.



The Tunnel at Pound Bend in flood.

Peter Finch, as he appeared in the Australian movie *Mr Chedworth Steps Out*.

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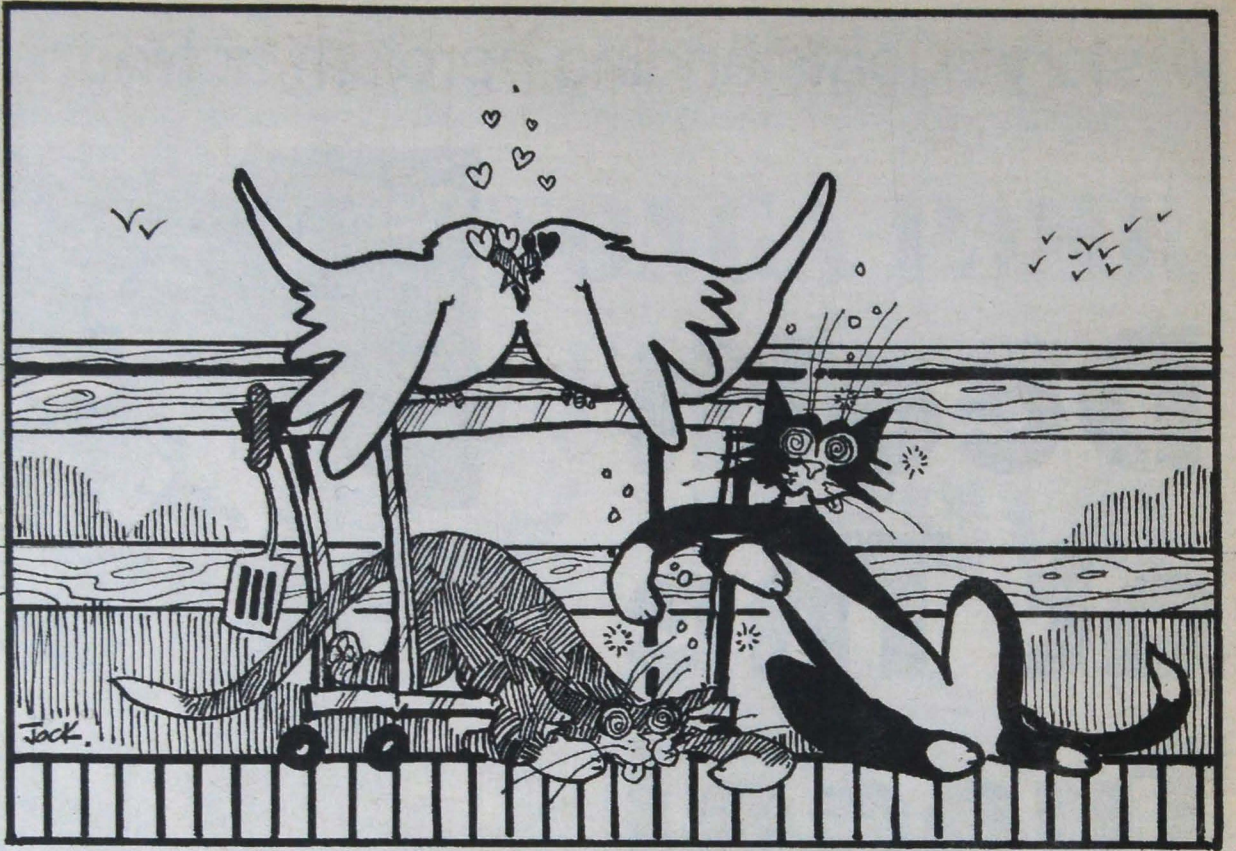
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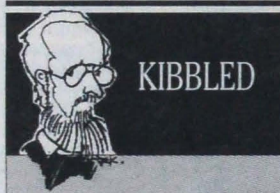
THE power of sex is very strong. Add this to human incompetence, feline pig-headedness, offspring travels and my desperation and you have the ingredients for a melodrama that could only take place at our house. Let's start with the peripatetic wanderings of offspring.

Herself and I have been somewhat spoilt in more ways than one. We have enjoyed the luxury of being able to head off to our weekenders happy in the knowledge that our Ideologically Unsounds, that is, the cats, would be looked after by either Boy Wonder or Gorgeous Creature. Just a phone call and we could be almost sure that the IUs would have enough food supplied to prevent them gormandising on the locals.

Now this worked well whilst they both lived at home, but now that Boy Wonder is off saving the world and Gorgeous Creature has decided to take culture to Europe, we have been without feeders.

We managed for some time, by imposing on the goodwill of neighbours and by leaving mountains of dry food so pussies could graze continually—and graze continually they did, to the extent of one entire large packet of Whiskettes! I suspect a party, so if anyone heard raucous music and saw cats waddling from the direction of our house...

So with necessity being the mother of invention, we joined the rest of the real world and had a family argument.



KIBBLED

"...so if anyone heard raucous music and saw cats waddling from the direction of our house..."

"There's nothing to discuss. We have to get rid of them." This I thought to be a perfectly reasonable solution.

"Don't be ridiculous! You can't do that and, tell me, how would you do it. Anyway, I won't let you. We'll just do what everyone else does. We take them with us."

And that's why I fronted up to the local vet to buy two carry boxes and some sedatives. The latter were for the cats but, in hindsight, I should have taken them.

The trip down was accompanied by piteous mewling and the occasional rasp on the wall of the box as they tried their con-

traband files on the breathing holes. After an hour and a half, the pills had done their job and we thought we had conquered feline transportation.

When we arrived the front half of the cats seemed to have parted company from their hind legs. The two staggered around, exploring escape routes and bumping into one another. On the spot we decided half a tablet would be ample for the home journey.

We gave them food and water, set up their litter tray and got about our own business. The mewling continued as their senses and coordination returned and the horror of their situation struck them. The plot had been to get them accustomed to the interior, then they could live on the upper deck, safe from predators and safe from predating.

It must have been the residual sedative that dulled their sniffers to the two pigeons that had nested on the trolley of the barbecue on the deck. True, we only noticed them when we heard the incessant cooing that commenced when we were eating our meal. At first we thought it was romantic, all this billing and cooing, but then romance evaporated and extermination thoughts entered my head.

"They're just introduced, feral birds. We'd be doing the environment a service by moving them on," I suggested. Brooking no opposition I continued. "I can't kill them, but what about we scare them off? Let's leave the cats on the deck and they'll

frighten the pigeons, who'll fly away, along with our problem."

Having hit upon a defensible biological control concept we put it into action, or more correctly, we would have put it into action had it not been for the bull.

Now it so happens that, from our upper deck, we overlook a nearby paddock in which farmer Jack has his cattle. As soon as IU1, George, stepped out of the doorway, through the trees he spied Ferdinand, the black bull. George gave a very good imitation of a hunting pointer, then turned tail and slithered to the bedroom and under the bed, where he stayed for the rest of the weekend. Meanwhile the courting pigeons cooed arias and love duets despite my menacing attacks with waving arms and Herself's equally unsuccessful shooting sounds. The pair merely flew off the railing, did a circuit of the house and, hand-in-hand, landed to continue their courting.

With half a tablet in the cats, the return journey was no better. Their cries only reminded me of life's meaning. We have two woosy pussies who refuse to like rural life, two pigeons who will have assumed possession of our house next time we return and, more importantly, I've come to the gut-wrenching realisation that there'll always be a place at home for BW and GC. Well, on the weekends anyway!

Merry Christmas to you all.

ROGER KIBELL

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Of moments of magic among the ferns

THE air was cooling. A whiff of breeze, up from the river, ruffled the fawn-feathered plumes of the spear grass that had somehow gained footing in the shallow sandstone soils of these cliffs.

The escarpment of Warrandyte's gorge is rugged, remote and definitely not for the faint-hearted. There are no walking tracks here. By sheer luck I had found a small rock ledge; somewhere to sit in relative safety. Leaning back against the cliff face I could feel the warmth of the day captured in the rock. It penetrated my t-shirt and seeped into my skin. The sensation was comforting—like the touch of an old friend.

On the ledge I noticed a scattering of bluebells growing in a meagre pocket of soil, their spiky petals like fallen chips of sky caught in the rock crevice.

Also surviving in these impoverished conditions was a plant whose ancestors, and indeed most of its present day representatives, are more at home in the shade of a damp gully. It was a fern. Predictably called Rock Fern, but also, slightly more imaginatively known as Resurrection Fern due to the plant's ability to miraculously revive following rain and after becoming shrivelled and brittle brown over summer.

There are 15 rock fern representatives Australia-wide, four species are found in Victoria, three of which occur on this Warrandyte cliff. The cluster of partly desiccated fronds at my feet superficially looked like the most common and widespread variety of Rock Fern. However, the underside of its fronds were densely covered in ginger-brown, hair-like scales, a characteristic of the rarest of Warrandyte's three—the Bristly Cloak Fern. Insulating scales are just one adaptation which en-

NATURE

By **PAT COUPAR**
Drawn by **MELANIE COUPAR**

able these ferns to survive drought conditions. Consequently those that grow in the most arid places have the thickest covering of scales.

The rock ledge was a perfect vantage point to view the river. It had been a torrid year for the Yarra with an unexpected early flood in April followed by another even greater flood in August. However, the brown river had regained its temper and now flowed complacently, sparkling in the late afternoon sun. Although evidence of its former fury remains in the form of a smooth-trunked Manna Gum uprooted and lying forlornly on its side. A forest giant felled by the force of water.

I thought back over the year. Apart from the floods, which probably did more good than harm, the weather had been temperate and kind to the local environment. Summer was warm, but not hot, there were no bushfires, no drought. Autumn rain came more or less when it should and a good fungi display resulted. A wet, relatively mild winter gave us again a superb wildflower show in spring.

Now, entering December, the freshness of spring is receding. It is a time of the longest daylight hours of the year, a time to be outside not inside. December, though, has the distraction of Christmas and it's hard to es-



cape entanglement in the New Year net. As usual I had given little thought to the necessary preparations for these festivities. Sooner or later I would have to face the chaos ahead.

But ahead also was another year in this place which, by good fortune, is my home. No matter how long I live in Warrandyte or how many times I walk the bushland or canoe the river, there will

always be new and exciting discoveries to make. The living bush is an ever-changing environment. The old and sick are continually being replaced by the young and healthy. With the freedom of the air at their wingtips, birds and insects come and go. No season is ever the same, every year is different. That is the nature of nature and I love it.

Where it's beautiful one day, miserable the next

THERE'S no shortage of surprises in the weather box at this time of the year. How our country friends and relatives must envy us! Unfortunately souls. How boring for them to be awoken, day after day, by shafts of golden sunlight beamed straight at their beds from a glowing horizon. How tedious to watch rainclouds build up slowly over a day or two, when instead they could have gallons of water dumped on them, literally out of the blue.

We Warrandytians enjoy real weather: the immense variability of it, its propensity to suddenly transpose hot and cold, to dump hail from an almost clear sky, to hurl either a dust-storm or a downpour at the most meticulously-planned summer barbecue.

Running abreast of its capricious whims and tantrums develops our powers of organisation to their fullest. Riding its roller-coaster from the heights of joyous exhilaration to the depths of frustrated despair keeps the artistically-inclined among us in frequent touch with almost the entirety of their emo-



OUR PLACE

By **MARILYN MOORE**

tional range. Could life as we know it exist in any other climate?

Probably not. Our weather is character-building to say the least. Picture Yarra Street recently: cold, windy, with leaves and litter gusting wildly until a deluge came and squished it all into sodden heaps. Rain and hail continued into the night, washing out the night tennis matches even before they'd begun. Yet the next day dawned pinkly shimmering, like glorious trumpet fanfare. Schoolchildren

wilted in the heat at 'first play'. By noon, our fern-laden hanging baskets were browned to a crisp. Even the budgies went quiet. At four o'clock, the school bus delivered its weary load into a dusty heat-haze, and by 10 past a gathering of young hopefuls in gorgeous bathers hovered around our pool.

First dip of the season and the occasion demanded prolonged and noisy anticipatory activity. Much promenading with and without various accessories took place before someone courageously dropped the first 'bomb'.

The rest followed like lemmings. "Fer-ruit Lo-o-ops!" "Moo-Cow!" "Sho-o-oot!" The revellers persevered, graceful as dolphins, until common sense and a million ravenous mosquitoes prevailed.

Odd, but on the next hot day nobody mentioned the pool. Instead there was a unanimous vote for the Whittlesea Show, where the sun blazed splendidly

and the sheen on the glossy flanks of well-groomed livestock was matched only by the broad smiles of prize-winning owners.

Crowds cheered, market stalls buzzed; country Victoria was happily going about its business.

Back home next day at a dismal athletics carnival we shivered in a cold grey downpour for more than six hours. Sodden bodies huddled miserably under clusters of useless umbrellas and sagging tarpaulins. Greasy clay underfoot rendered walking farcical. The bleakness was relieved only by some enterprising toddlers converting a lake (formerly a long jump pit) into a series of canals.

Driving home wasn't much fun, either, wallowing in a pool of drips. The alleged delights of our climate were looking pretty sick. Very tempting to have a little holiday with our country cousins: 'boring' weather might just have some redeeming features after all.

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Flying with the cocky mob

STORY BY GLEN JAMESON • ARTWORK BY JOCK MACNEISH

THE sulphur-crested cockatoo mob at Glynn's in the Yarra Valley Parklands are so crestfallen they have barely raised a scraw since the ibis moved them on.

It is now early spring, a week after the 1994 equinox. The dry conditions inland have begun bringing interesting visitors to Glynn's and have extended the stay of such migrating regulars as the big mob of at least 200 ibis, both sacred and straw-necked, who have been here from early winter.

The ibis mob's favourite overnight roosts are the massive manna gums overlooking the river in the south-west corner of Glynn's, previously the favourite roost of the sulphur-crested cockatoos.

The occupation of the site by the ibis contrasts strongly with the previous reign of the white cockies. The ibis return to their roosts in Glynn's in the dusking early evening, after a full day's honest slog in the water meadows and swamps, feeding on insects. None of this turning up mid-afternoon like the larrikin cockies, full of bravado and bragging shrieks.

The ibis stream into Glynn's in meticulously ordered flight patterns; awesome, immaculate lines that enthralled the pharaohs and still convey a sense of timeless antiquity. Their demure honking is heard faintly on the breeze; from a distance it can barely be heard at all.

The ibis flight path usually follows the river as they return from the extensive billabong and wetland system of the Yarra Flats (Heidelberg and Ivanhoe)

downstream. As their stay lengthens due to dry inland conditions, the ibis come from even more disparate directions: Kangaroo Ground, Eltham and Pantom Hill.

Disgruntled, the white cockies kept to the eastern end of Glynn's and bided their time. Summer had to come and the ibis must eventually leave.

Do sulphur-crested cockatoos pose a management problem because of their dominating numbers? Are they a positive for park management or do they threaten other wildlife and the health and integrity of the remnant bushland? They have been observed locally, harassing wedge-tail eagles, whistling kites and, of course, the yellow-tailed black cockatoos. Could they be over-harvesting local eucalypt and other remnant bushland seed?

The overclearing for agriculture that has previously occurred on Glynn's and the incursion of surrounding residential areas has unbalanced the ecosystem, creating ideal conditions for their population explosion. The cockies, who prefer open, lightly forested habitats, are behaving like classic colonisers, taking advantage of a vacuum, a niche that must be filled.

Colonisers invade in waves of succession, just as cassinias, wattles and wallaby grasses do in some cases in the plant world. Niches are filled and are then succeeded by another assemblage of organisms as conditions change due to the effects of the colonisers' life cycles.

This is what we are observing; a vital stage in the initial phase in the restoration of the urban wilderness. As the

revegetation fills out and other fauna find Glynn's, it will become less attractive habitat to the white cockies, who will be less able to dominate the site.

Once the Glynn's wetlands become a suitable site for the ibis to breed, they



may develop into a resident mob, which will make it even more uncomfortable for the white cockies.

The cockatoo mob may have helped establish a small group of long-billed corellas which has been in residence for the past years. Even a cage-escaped Major Mitchell cockatoo flew with the

sulphur-crested cockies a few years ago, until apparently falling prey to the whistling kites who also use Glynn's.

What is apparent is that when we also consider the recruitment and generation of other wildlife within Glynn's, the power that 'sanctuary areas' have in restoring the ecology is immense and of the greatest importance to the urban wilderness.

Their high numbers may be antagonising the local human community. Damage that they can do to fruit and nut trees and, in some cases, to timber on houses—even the racket they kick up—can make them unpopular. However, those members of the human community who may be negatively inclined should realise that we all have to make allowances in the process of environmental reconciliation.

There have not been many recordings of the white form of the grey goshawk in the middle Yarra Region. It is an uncommon and mysterious visitor-vagrant, probably coming in during hard times elsewhere and this, 1994, was the year for it. The white form of the grey goshawk (the other form is, surprisingly, very grey) is the dominant form of the bird around the coast of Victoria, in Tasmania and over in the Kimberley region. One of the preferred habitats of the white goshawk is heavily timbered edges of water courses. The bird is reputedly a particularly powerful, highly skilled hunter and I caught sight of it near the Annulus Billabong (Yarra Flats Park, Ivanhoe) in April, at first thinking it to be a white cockie because of the size of its wings. A good view of it as it sat calmly whilst we scrutinised

its details, confirmed it as the white form of the grey goshawk, probably a female which is the larger of the sexes. Observations of probably the same bird, or perhaps its partner, were made in Warrandyte and on the Yarra Flats during winter and a later springtime observation of the bird calling from the large sugar gum that rises above the canopy on the crest of the Glynn's hill.

The white form of the grey goshawk was recorded at Glynn's around the summer solstice of 1994 and there is speculation that it may be breeding locally.

Would it breed so far from its usual territory? Would it take up permanent residence? Glynn's certainly provides opportunities that make it attractive for the goshawk to stay. They have been known to fly with flocks of white cockies, using them as camouflage to take smaller birds who fail to notice the slightly different bird in the flock.

The mix of open grassy areas, regenerating slopes, dry sclerophyll hill country, riparian forest, river and wetlands generates a wide variety of prey and habitat. It is these qualities that create biological opportunity and give importance to an area such as Glynn's, especially in a regional context, providing refuge in times of environmental stress in other parts of the country.

It is the thrill of seeing the rare white bird finding and using these resources that is a reward for all the planning and work needed to restore the urban wilderness. It is a benchmark of the success of the park vision to record a rare white bird as part of the fauna.



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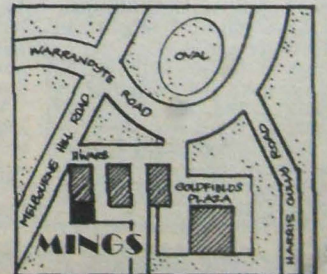
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ALICE WATSON

A truly beloved character

WARRANDYTE was deeply saddened late last month to learn of the death of Alice Watson (Moore), one of the town's most widely loved personalities.

Former custodian of the White House and founder of the Warrandyte Lions Opportunity Shop, Alice died peacefully at a nursing home in Blackburn. She was three months short of her 90th birthday.

Alice Jessie Moore was born in Nan-king, China, on February 19, 1907. Her father, Samuel Taylor, was a British official in the Chinese Imperial Customs, which at the time was run by Britain.

Alice was the eldest of a family of four boys and two girls. Her brother James died in infancy of sunstroke and cholera. Because of this Alice was sent to Australia to live with relatives. Eventually she was joined by the rest of her family.

In Melbourne she was educated at PLC where she had a strong grounding in music, later passing her college music exam. She was a competent pianist and a lover of classical music.

After an initial meeting with Roy McKenzie at a tennis match the pair married in 1930 and had two children,

Iain and Ken.

Roy was a member of the Victorian Scottish Regiment and an employee of the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works. When war broke out he was seconded to the 2/24th Battalion and fought in the Western Desert and Tobruk, where he was killed in May 1941.

Alice's extremely happy marriage ended with a telegram, received by Iain one Saturday morning while Alice was out shopping. She later married again unsuccessfully.

Following this she met Ken Watson and worked with him at his hotel, the Sir Charles Hotham, in Spencer Street. When he sold the hotel and bought the Grand Hotel in Warrandyte, Alice followed. She became a much-loved part of the Warrandyte community and remained so until her death.

When they sold the Grand and retired to Queensland, Alice was not happy. She missed being away from her many family and friends in Warrandyte.

She returned to the town and became custodian of the White House, the historic community building which occupied a site at the Warrandyte Reserve until its recent demoli-

tion. Alice left the White House when it ceased to exist as a community centre and moved into a unit in Stiggart Street.

Alice's pet project was the Warrandyte Lions Opportunity Shop, which currently thrives at the new community centre.

Her attitude to life was, that if yesterday was bad, tomorrow will be better. She made many valued friendships in Warrandyte, which was her spiritual and physical home. She loved seeing her family and was very proud of her six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

After breaking her hip in February this year she spent a few months at the Austin Hospital before moving to a nursing home in Blackburn. She died peacefully a few days after returning from a very happy holiday at Portarlington.

● A celebration of the life of Alice Watson will be held at 7pm on Wednesday, February 19, 1997 (the day she would have turned 90) in the foyer of Warrandyte Community Centre. Anyone with anecdotes or enquiries should ring Louise Joy on 9844 3600. Children are welcome and everyone is asked to bring a plate and a bottle.



TRACY 'SNOWY' PRIOR

Brave man remembered

WARRANDYTE suffered a great loss last month when Tracy "Snowy" Prior, a much-loved player,

coach and committee member of the Warrandyte Football Club, died at the age of 34.

Born and raised in Reservoir, Snowy spent a fair portion of his youth at the family's beach house at Blairgowrie. This is where he developed a love of surfing, which complemented his talents and interest in football and athletics.

His first introduction to competitive sport was at the age of eight at the little athletics at Preston Oval. At the start of his 400 metre race he either fell or was pushed over and gave away a great start. Determined to catch the field, he not only overtook the pack but won the race; beginning a successful athletic career. He was named Little Athlete of the Year at the Preston when he was 11.

Other achievements included finishing second in the all-high school final in the 800 metres, second in the City of Melbourne 800 metre final and third in the Victorian 800 metre final in the

Victorian little athletics championship. He was also successful in relay teams at the state championships.

He loved football, joining the Reservoir Colts under 10s when he was seven. He played in a premiership team with the Colts and later played at Banyule, Sorrento and Warrandyte.

At 16, while attending Lakeside High School, he met Dee. They were inseparable. In 1982 at the age of 20, Snowy was diagnosed with diabetes and auto-immune liver disease.

The following year, five years after their first meeting, Snowy and Dee married, immediately moving into their own home in Warrandyte. The following year he started playing football for the Bloods, and joined its committee, having taken the town and its club to heart.

Unfortunately, his health began to deteriorate. The month after the birth of first child Loughlan in August 1988, Snowy became Victoria's third liver transplant recipient in an operation at the Austin Hospital.

Following the successful transplant he became involved in the promotion of them, speaking

with doctors and hospital staff at conferences, service clubs and schools.

He was asked to speak to patients waiting for transplants, providing a great example of what can be achieved. He joined the committee of the Australian Transplant Sports Association, Friends of the Liver Transplant Unit (for the Austin Hospital Liver Unit) and wrote a chapter for a book called Living With Diabetes, on what it is like to be a diabetic and how to cope with transplantation.

His sporting prowess took him to Singapore in 1989 where he represented Australia in the World Transplant Games. Later that year daughter Madeleine was born. She was the first baby born in Victoria to someone who has had a liver transplant.

While the transplant prevented him from playing football, Snowy continued his involvement with the club. He coached several junior teams and was runner for the senior side, including their 1993 premiership year.

During the week, Snowy was a successful plumber, having started his own plumbing busi-

ness in 1990. He had been apprenticed to the family plumbing business at a younger age. He managed to keep the plumbing business going despite 58 admissions to hospital up until the time of his death.

Despite continuing health problems his third child (Nicolette) was born in 1992 and a fourth (Campbell) in 1995.

Eventually he decided a second transplant was needed and in April 1995 was put on the waiting list. Defying the odds and hiding the pain from everyone, he continued to work up until Christmas 1995.

In July 1996 he had his second transplant. It was an apparent success and he was home in two weeks. But a week later he returned to hospital with an infection. On-going problems, including cardiac arrest and complete body degeneration from years of illness, caused his death, not the transplanted liver which functioned well.

His funeral service was attended by many hospital staff, typifying the effect Snowy had on them and his inspiration as to how all transplant recipients should live.

HOWARD BENSCH
'Mr Fixit' left us
with many
fond memories

HOWARD Bensch, who first arrived in Warrandyte 30 years ago, died last month at the age of 74. He was well-known and greatly liked by many local folk.

Howard started his working life as an apprentice electrician at the age of 16, the same time he first met future wife Joyce, who was two years younger. Five years later, in 1943, the pair married—the start of a long and immensely successful partnership. While money was scarce in their early years nothing could dim the many happy memories the two shared.

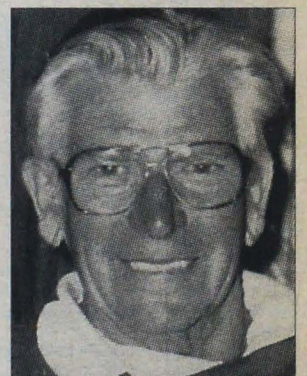
Howard was widely known by his family and friends for bright ideas and sudden inspirations. This often saw him and Joyce roaming to various destinations throughout Victoria and New South Wales. Joyce was always there, making a comfortable home in a house, mobile home or caravan. Whatever the situation called for.

Howard decided to take a break from electrical work to try his hand at the used car business. While he met with a fair degree of success, in 1966 he moved from Northcote to Warrandyte where he began a restaurant and reception centre in the White House.

Eventually he returned to the electrical trade, initially as a maintenance electrician at the Southern Cross Hotel in Melbourne. After employment by the Board of Works at the Preston Pipe Depot he gained promotion to the Upper Thompson Dam project and subsequently the Sugarloaf Dam at Christmas Hills.

A stroke at the age of 58 ended his working career, and he and Joyce retired to the idyllic surroundings of Nambucca Heads for three years.

The pair were soon on the move again, however, this time to Corowa where Howard developed a reputa-



tion as the local handyman fixing electrical appliances. He also carved out a niche as a handy bowler—winning the club trophy. Strong, determined and likeable, it was never difficult for him to make friends.

The same attributes became evident in his three sons—Ian, Garry and Mark—who were introduced to Howard's love of water sports at an early age. In his younger years Howard was social secretary of the Victorian Speedboat Club, organising regattas at Albert Park Lake, Yarrawonga and Lake Eppalock. The family often spent many Christmas and Easter holidays enjoying water-skiing.

Howard was the proud grandfather of eight grandchildren and one grandson, ranging in ages from two to 27 years. He was proud of them all.

But the final summing up of Howard's character is best left to son Ian, who, like Garry and Mark, enjoyed many wonderful times with him.

"All in all his life is a story of a very interesting bloke who loved his family and friends. He was very loyal and could always be relied upon in good and troubled times. He had a taste for life and an adventurous spirit."

Thanks everyone, for a great year

Time to thank all those people, mostly volunteers, who have worked so hard—and had so much fun—bringing you what we believe is the best community newspaper in the country.

News stories were by David Wyman, Clinton Grybas, Cliff Green, Fia Clendinnen and Lisa Santamaria. Regular columnists included Smokey Joe, Pat Coupar, Roger Kibell, Judy Green and Marilyn Moore. Features by Glen Jameson, Julie Murray and Nicholas Parsons. Sports pages were by Lee Tindale, Clinton Grybas and Judy Green. Occasional contributors included Ron Harris, John Hanson, David Hogg, Margaret Burke, Irving Reid, Janet Foote, Louise Joy, Margaret Dimech and Marion Winton.

A special feature of the Diary has always been its black and white artwork. Artists this year included Jock Macneish, Paul Williams, Melanie Coupar and Wayne Rankin. Photographs were

taken by Jan Tindale and Sandy Burgoyne.

The paper was edited and designed by Cliff Green and Lee Tindale, assisted by sub-editor Clinton Grybas. Chief-of-staff Jan Tindale kept everyone up to the mark and assisted with research and community liaison.

Rachel Schroeder designed the ads, handled production and maintained our computers, assisted by Mark Schroeder. Maureen Geldard and John Boyle ferried material around the suburbs.

Ken Allardice and his people at Allardice Graphic Arts took our computer data and converted it to beautifully sharp film. The craftspeople at Streamline Press printed the paper with care, patience and good humour—and always on time.

Rae Danks took on the role of advertising manager with charm, efficiency and infinite patience and John Roberts made sense of

our somewhat tangled corporate affairs. Don Humpreys kept our office spic and span. Peter Norman looked after distribution, dramatically lifting our circulation in the process. And a big thank-you to our many distribution points—your help in getting our paper out to the community is deeply appreciated.

Last but not least, we remember the people who make it all financially possible—our advertisers. Please show your appreciation by favouring them with your patronage, folks.

And, finally, heartfelt thanks to you, our ever loyal and enthusiastic readers, with a special mention for those of you who put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and contributed to our Dear Diary page.

Don't look for your Diary in January—we're taking a few weeks off—but we'll be back, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, on the second Friday in February. In

CLYDE & OCKER



"Of course I like Warrandyte, Ock. I wouldn't be livin' in the rotten joint if I didn't like it!"

the meantime, here's wishing everyone a joyous Christmas and a bright and peaceful 1997.



MANNINGHAM

RUFFEY LAKE PARK (MUNICIPAL GARDENS) ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND PROPOSAL DRAFT SKETCH DESIGN

Consultants have prepared the draft sketch designs for the Ruffey Lake Park (Municipal Gardens) Adventure Playground. The playground has been sited west of the upper barbecue shelter.

Proposed features include: swings on wings; bullock cart; tower; flying fox; super slides; sand pits; cubby house; clatter bridge; and sound pipes.

The draft design is on display in the Municipal offices foyer, 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster or copies are available by contacting Council's Open Space Planner.

Comments on the draft designs are invited during December and January 1997.

If you wish to comment on the draft plans or register your interest in the project please contact:

Kristen Allen
Open Space Planner
Manningham City Council
PO Box 1, Doncaster 3108

Phone: 9840 9468, Facsimile: 9848 3110



A big night out for our primary school kids

A big event at Warrandyte Primary School last month was the annual Grade 2 sleep-over, when 70 excited seven and eight year-olds slept overnight at the school.

"The highlights for the students included the obligatory sausage sizzle and a spotlighting tour of the adjacent Fourth Hill section of the state park," school spokesperson Judy Finger said. "The search for elusive wildlife was fruitless, however. The pitter patter of so many tiny feet was apparently too much even for Warrandyte's brushtail

possums."

The sleep-over (pictured above) is part of the students' introduction to the school's ongoing camping program.

"It enables those children who have not slept away from home before to do so in a familiar environment with people they know and trust, and close to the security of home."

The program builds at each grade level with longer and more adventurous camps culminating in Grade 6 spending five days at Whitstock Lodge at the Grampians.

They went fishing...

Warrandyte Rotary Club's annual fishing day proved a success last month with 228 people joining the chase for fish in the Yarra River.

More than 160 fish of many varieties were caught, including a 2.2 kilogram Murray Cod. Many of the catches were returned to the river.

Keen entrants started arriving at 5am for the catch, with both children and more experienced anglers netting prizes donated by Jarvis Walker and K Mart. Proceeds from the day will go towards Christmas food parcels for the local community.

Gaming area doubled

Warrandyte's Grand Hotel has doubled the size of its gaming room and expanded its bistro in a bold new extension to the building.

Hotel manager Stephen Beaumont told the *Diary* the bistro's seating capacity has been enlarged to cater for 140 people. "The poker machines have been moved next door to where the take-away food shop was to enable the bistro's expansion."

"The bistro has proved to be quite popular recently and we have often had trouble accommodating everyone, prompting the development. The timing is excellent for us in the lead-up to Christmas."

Mr Beaumont said the new gaming room would not include an increase in the number of machines, which is 22, just the doubling of space for them. "The new room has a gold mine theme, is cavern-shaped with rocks on the wall and ceiling and nuggets poking out."

"By moving into the new location we have been able to make the room bigger and give it a friendlier atmosphere."

The new room was opened on December 10 with special giveaways and prizes to lure punters before Christmas.

The hotel, which now employs 45 staff, is one of Warrandyte's largest employers.

The *Diary* believes that the two remaining empty shops in the group next to the hotel are being renovated and combined for a proposed "Mediterranean-style" restaurant.

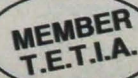
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REIKI HEALING/TAROT READING: Gift Vouchers are available. Enquiries: Sandra McCarthy 9712 0436. (Member of the Tarot Guild of Aust).

FOR SALE: Shade cloth—brand new. Color: Black. Size: 3.5m x 14m. \$100 9844 2660

HANDYMAN/CARPENTER: A joyful Christmas and safe New Year to you all! Don Hughes. 9844 0900.

ARE YOUR wildflowers being overwhelmed by weeds? Advice and assistance: Joan of Warrandyte Bushscapes. AH 9844 3213.

HOUSE WANTED: Teaching couple, no children, looking for a house or flat to rent in Warrandyte—Warranwood—Wonga Park area. Ring Di or John on 9844 3849 after 4pm. References available.

EXPERIENCED TUTOR AVAILABLE for English, History and Legal Studies (Year 7 to VCE). Phone Allison Rowe on 9712 0448.

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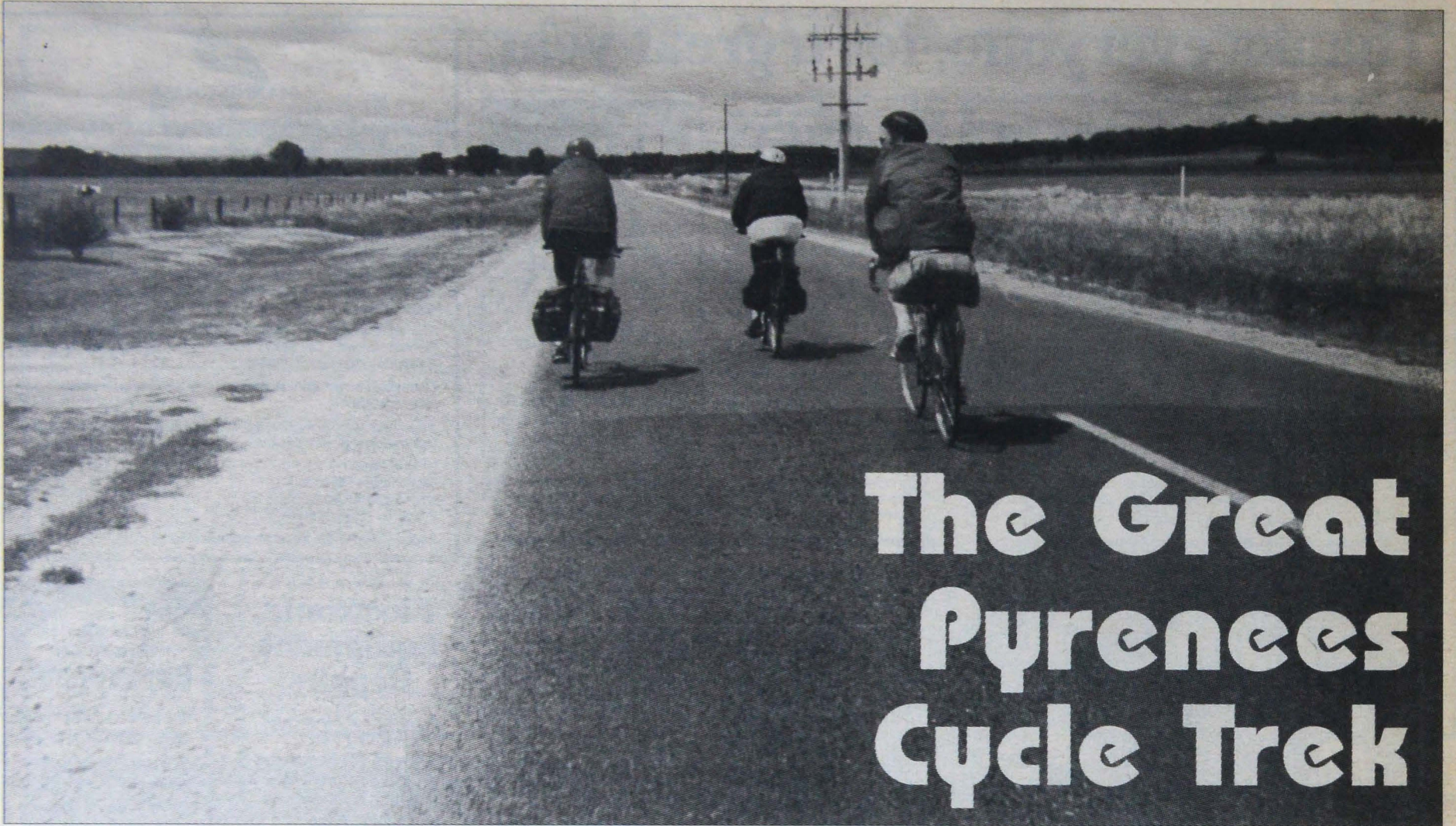
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The Great Pyrenees Cycle Trek

Eight Warrandyte cyclists recently took time out to see more of Victoria from the saddles of their bikes. MARION WINTON was one of them.



ALRIGHT, it may not be Europe, but heaving our bikes into the luggage van at Spencer Street station on a wet Wednesday Melbourne morning, the central Victorian highlands seemed sufficiently far flung to be alluring, and the mountain range a good deal more accessible than its European namesake.

While the rest of Warrandyte lay sleeping, Mike the bike of Warrandyte Cycles had transported our bikes to the station. We barely had time to complain about the Vic Rail coffee and recover from the brief indignity of being thrown out of first class before we were reclaiming our cycles at Bendigo Central, adjusting our panniers and pedalling towards Maldon and our first night's stay.

The road to Maldon mid-week was heavy with food and vehicle transporters, all competing with us for a small piece of tarmac. Generally vehicles gave our group of eight a generous berth and we were able to concentrate our energy on battling a fairly strong head-wind and relocating the centre of gravity to allow for the weight of our panniers, carrying clothing and requirements for the next few days.

Our group included a nurse, retired geology instructor, his wife, our leader, a barbecue chef and three in various stages of active retirement. Our bikes reflected our faith in guiding luminaries: Apollo, Malvern Star and Shogun. We had no cause for concern. Basic problems like being able to release jammed brake blocks, reconfiguring of gears and wheel realignment offered little challenge to our on-the-spot mechanics, leaving the experts free to carry out the important task of choosing suitable lunch stops.

Place names like Nuggetty Hills, Perkins and Welshman's Reefs,

mullock heaps, and an abandoned gold dredge discovered beside the Bendigo-Maldon road, bore witness to the mining activity of the mid to late nineteenth century. The first day put the whole into an historical context and we began to feel in touch with the physicality of the area in a manner which bike riding makes uniquely possible.

We had cycled approximately 40 kilometres after leaving Bendigo station and while the rain held off for most of the time the wind had demanded greater pumping of calf muscles and minor complaints were beginning to be voiced when we came swooping into the home stretch along the westerly approach to Maldon.

I know messing about in boats is supposed to be fun, but there isn't anything quite like the freedom of being propelled by one's own pedal power, with time to observe the stark, sculptural beauty of dead tree trunks, the monumental stillness of noonday cows and the rolling hills extending to an apparently limitless distance. And if occasionally riders took a little longer, on the first day, to catch up to the main group, it was merely that they needed extra time to absorb the changing scene.

After overnight recuperation at the Eaglehawk Motel—a faithful recreation of the original brick hotel, complete with antiques, cottage gardens, excellent food and an endearing hostess—we rode down the main street of Maldon and out along the Newstead Road, following the rail line to Castlemaine. The scenery here was reminiscent of the French countryside: European trees, pines and

rows of poplars, suggesting the Pyrenees connection.

We stopped at Vaughan Springs for lunch and had the benefit of our resident geologist's experience of the area as he explained to us the formation of anticlines, how to identify indicator reefs and discussed the flat top lava flow which we "might have noticed as we rode into Guildford". Golden whistler, whip birds and a friendly blue wren hovered as we reluctantly remounted to climb the steep hills leading towards Fryerstown.

A further stop, at the remains of the Duke of Cornwall's mine—preserved as a memorial to early Cornish engineers who worked in the area—then uphill again, all the way to Castlemaine, where even a luke warm spa seemed inviting and afforded time for some serious decision-making as to choice of dinner venue.

On our last day we had sufficient time to explore Castlemaine on wheels, which proved almost as hilly as Warrandyte. A last hurrah as we rode to the station and in what seemed like an indecently short time we were back at Spencer Street station, thanking Austin Polley for planning a thoroughly interesting and enjoyable cycling experience. Three of the group were sufficiently inspired to ride a final leg, from the city to Warrandyte.

If anyone is foolhardy enough to want to join us, the group meets every Wednesday at the Warrandyte cycle shop, at the West End, at 10am. All that is required is a reliable bike (Mike will offer advice and service) a reasonable level of fitness and plenty of enthusiasm.





Jen Tindale



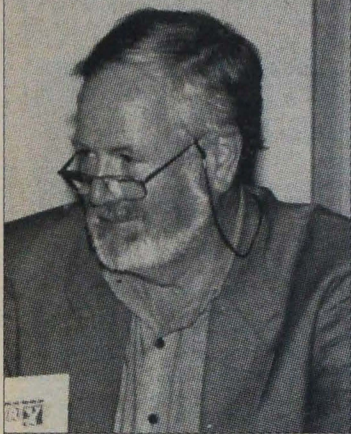
Herself, Roger Kibell, Judy Green



Clinton Grybas



Pat Coupar



David Wyman

Putting a face to the byline

Sandy Burgoyne took these pix of your favourite (hic) scribes at the *Diary's* 26th anniversary party at Mings Restaurant.



Heather and Glen Jameson



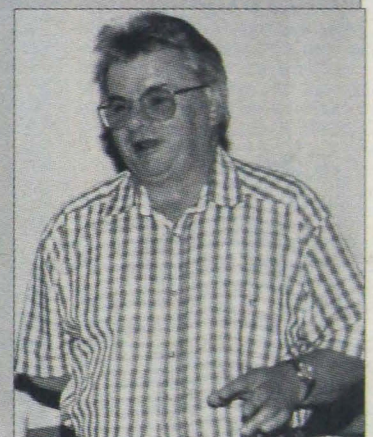
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Lassi — Welcome Drink ★ Popadum ★ Choice of Chicken, Lamb, Beef, Vegetable, Curry or Mini Tandoori Platter served with Saffron Rice, Tandoori Naan and Tossed Green Salad.

DUM PUKHT FOOD
Every Thursday Night

Youth program

Warrandyte Youth Services, sponsored by Manningham City Council, are offering an exciting January holiday program to young people from 12 to 25 years of age. On Thursday, January 9, there will be canoeing on the Yarra from 9am to 1pm. Cost is \$15, concession \$12. Tuesday, January 14 will be a horse riding day at Uncle Nev's, from 9am to 4pm, \$25 with \$20 concession. On Thursday, January 16 there will be ice-skating and bowling, from 9.30am to 3.30pm, cost \$15, concession \$12. There will be a beach trip to Torquay on Tuesday, January 21, from 9am to 5.30pm, cost \$10, concession \$8. The program will finish with zone 3 laser games, billiards and movies on Thursday, January 23, from 9.30am to 4.30pm, cost \$15, concession \$12. For further information call Cathy Adamson on 9844 2985 or Lisa Foley on 9848 2977.

Pre-school

The Yarra Warra pre-school in North Warrandyte has a new director. Nicole Fitzgerald, who has been appointed to start in 1997, is keen to promote interaction among the children, particularly in the three year-old groups. Ms Fitzgerald (25) feels, as a young director, she can bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the pre-school. Yarra Warra will have one four year-old group and two three year-old groups next year. Parents interested in the three year-old groups are asked to phone the enrolments officer, Anne, on 9844 2976.

Exhibition

Canteen Teenagers, along with Nancye Bell and Mariann Moxon, are presenting an exhibition at Manningham Artspace from Monday, December 11, through to Tuesday, December 19. The exhibition, entitled Adventure With Colour for Christmas, will be opened by Colette Mann at 6.45pm on December 11. At 7.15 there will be an auction of the Canteen painters' works and of a symbolic ceramic piece by Mariann Moxon. The Canteen artists are teenagers with cancer. The gallery is open Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 5pm and Saturday and Sunday, 2pm to 5pm.

Thanks

The Warrandyte Historical Society would like to thank the Rotary Club of Warrandyte and society members for their help at the recent museum working bee. They report that their mission was well and truly accomplished.

Capsule

Residents in Nillumbik Shire can now hire the new, approved har-



Conducted by JUDY GREEN

Drop your news in the letterbox in the front door of our office at the Community Centre, fax it to 9844 4168, or post it to PO Box 209, Warrandyte, 3113, by the last Friday in the month.

ness type baby safety capsules. The council's human services manager, Jacquie Gilfedder, says that after December 31, hire of the older style capsules will be illegal. The new units can be hired for \$55, which includes a \$20 refundable deposit. For further information call Marian Batty on 9438 4097, seven days a week.

Park

Warrandyte State Park will hold a series of holiday activities during January. On Wednesday, January 22, there will be visits to park goldmines, with a

chance to try your hand at gold panning. This runs from 10am to 1.30pm and costs \$8, \$6 children and concession. On Monday, January 20, from 10am to 12 noon, you can join the rangers in their regular koala count, followed by a chat over billy tea and a BYO barbecue lunch. From 6am to 9am on Sunday, January 26, you can join local bird expert Ken Simpson on a walk along Pound Bend to view the birds as they awake. Bookings are essential for all events and can be made by phoning 9844 2659.

Childcare

Nillumbik Council has made places available at its Susan Street Playhouse, 56 Susan Street, Eltham, to cater for parents with busy Christmas schedules. Qualified childcare providers will be in attendance for three-hour sessions, 9am to 12 noon and 1pm to 4pm weekdays. Sessions cost \$3 per hour, per child. Bookings are essential and can be made through the Eltham Living and Learning Centre on 9439 2431 or 9439 3463. Further information on childcare in the Nillumbik Shire can be had by phoning Susan Forbes on 9433 3144.



A Warrandyte primary student clears the high jump at the school's twilight meeting.

School takes top sport award

Warrandyte Primary School was named the Outstanding Physical and Sport Education school for 1996 by the Department of Education last month.

The prestigious award recognises the hard work put in to sport and physical education at the school by teachers, children and parents, according to school spokesperson Judy Finger.

"It acknowledges that Warrandyte possesses

an exemplary physical and sport education program which is one of the best in Victorian Department of Education schools," she said.

A highlight of the school's program was the twilight athletics sports meeting held at Proclamation Park in Ringwood last month. All students took part in track and field events, which went into the evening to enable parents to watch after work. Anderson House won the competition.



Warrandyte Senior Citizens Club entertained 85 guests at their 34th Birthday Concert on Thursday, November 7. Their pianist Belle Wilkie broke her arm the night before, but Allan Ferguson stepped into the breach. Norm Pope accompanied on drums. On the previous Monday at the dress rehearsal, the concert party entertained 45 guests from the Gwenap Hostel.

Celebrity artists contribute to Eltham Gateway protest

Eltham Gateway Action Group (EGAG) have enlisted the support of many artists and well-known personalities for an exhibition which they hope will raise money for their legal battle against Nillumbik council.

EGAG president Jenni Mitchell told the Diary that more than 100 celebrities have been invited to paint, draw, scratch or cut and paste onto a canvas board which will be exhibited and sold—or auctioned—at Montsalvat on Sunday, December 15 at 5.30pm.

"The Celebrities Exhibition has been arranged as a way of raising money to help defray the

legal and associated expenses for the group to make an appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal," she said.

EGAG are appealing against the decision by Nillumbik commissioners to grant a planning permit which Ms Mitchell says will allow the development of a 24-hour petrol station, Hungry Jacks restaurant and retail outlets on the site of the old Eltham Shire Council municipal offices.

"Their decision will destroy the gateway to Eltham for all time. A gateway that has been nurtured by the community for the past 150 years as a green area," she said. "It is an area of

great local significance as well as being known nationally as the gate to Melbourne's Green Wedge."

Some of the celebrities who have been called upon for the exhibition include motor racing driver Peter Brock, writer and broadcaster Phillip Adams, sculptor Matcham Skipper, film maker Tim Burstall, artists Margot Know and Betty Burstall, musicians Sebastian Jorgensen and Graeme Bell, poet Judith Rodriguez, politician Gareth Evans and many others.

The exhibition will be held in the Long Gallery at Montsalvat on Sunday, December 15.

Local Christmas church services

The annual carols by candle-light service will be held in Stiggants Reserve on Sunday, December 15 at 8pm for an 8.30pm start. It is a combined presentation of the local churches. BYO candles and rugs. Donations will go to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.

ANGLICAN (9844 3473): Christmas Eve—11.30pm. Christmas Day—8am. Park Orchards: Christmas Day—9.30am. Boxing Day—8am. CATHOLIC (9876 1509): Christmas Eve—Midnight. Park Orchards: Christmas Eve—8pm. Christmas Day—10am.

COMMUNITY (9844 4148): Christmas Eve—7pm. Christmas Day—10am. UNITING (9844 3727): Christmas Eve—7.30pm and 11.30pm. Christmas Day—9am.

● Phone your church for transport or more information.

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2nd SAT every month: After Theatre Jump—Swing/Jazz Sax, bass, guitar
3rd SAT every month: Phase—Lori & Steve, 60s to 90s. Dancing
4th SAT every month: Wayne Horner—Solo singer/guitarist

WED DEC 25: Christmas lunch—nearly booked out. Inquire at hotel.

TUE DEC 31: NEW YEARS EVE—Welcome in the new year with Two Past Midnight. Cabaret, dancing, door prizes. Supper menu. BOOK early. A fun night in the BISTRO

SUN JAN 26: AUSTRALIA DAY 1997—Join Hugh McDonald from Redgum Bistro 1pm-4.30pm. Book early.



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\$10 BUDGET BUSTER

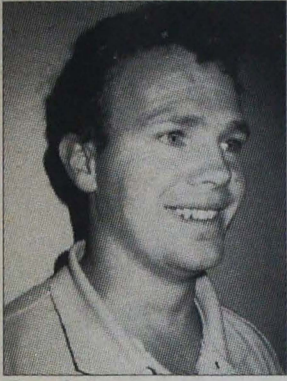
Thursday Lunch & Dinner

For only \$10 you receive your choice of \$10 meal from our chef's Special Selection plus \$5.00 Pokie Change Voucher

SUNDAY SUMMER SNACKS

AFTERNOON TEA IN THE BISTRO OR ON THE TERRACE

The new face of Warrandyte football



Greg Cole

By LEE TINDALE

Greg Cole, a 31-year-old rover, will come down from the mountains to be playing coach of Warrandyte Football Club next season.

And he promises to bring a considerable amount of playing talent with him. Cole comes to EDFL Second Division fresh from a 1996 premiership as assistant coach of South Belgrave in the Yarra Valley Mountain District Football League.

He brings with him an assistant coach, Andy Comello, a centre half-back/centre half-forward who has played interstate and in EDFL First Division.

Among others accompanying him will be wingman Russell Treverton, who played for Warrandyte in 1995 before joining Cole at South Belgrave last season. Cole's playing achievements include

two best and fairest awards with YVMDFL club Yarra Junction (his home town) and runner-up twice for the league award.

"Obviously I'd like Warrandyte to do better than they did last year (four wins and a draw from 18 games)," Cole told the *Diary*.

"I'd like to make the finals and I think nine wins would get us there. But my main aim at this stage is to get that first one under the belt."

Cole, a builder and tourist coach operator, said he would be looking for a more professional approach from his players. "We are EDFL Second Division and we have to pull together."

"We need a mixed bag of recruits and a strong nucleus of established club players." Also joining Cole at Warrandyte will be

his brother Steve, a key position man who would otherwise have played for newly-promoted First Division club Lilydale next season.

Another recruit will be full-forward Mick Dellaca, who has been training with EDFL First Division champions Donvale.

"We will be talking to several other players from various other clubs," Cole said.

Cole, who was appointed on November 29, replaces Ralph Jones, who was suspended for 12 months by the EDFL for misconduct in the second-last game of the season.

He said he wanted to speak to every player on Warrandyte's list and invited anyone he was unable to contact to phone him on 0419 33 44 30.

Training will start on January 13, but a number of players are already having a

run each Monday and Friday at the recreation reserve. All players are invited to these light sessions, which start at 6.30.

Cole has arranged a training came at Club Reefton, outside Warburton, for the weekend of February 15-16 and a number of pre-season practice matches will be played.

Last season's Under-18s coach Robert Ireland has been appointed club secretary, a position not filled at the annual general meeting in October.

President Jeff Evans said the club were still looking for trainers "and anyone else who would like to lend a hand in any way at all".

Anyone prepared to assist should contact the president on 9722 1111 or the secretary on 019 146 811.

D-Day for the Dytes!

Hitmen put Hooters in hot seat

By CLINTON GRYPAS

Defending premiers the Warrandyte Hitmen caused the upset in the first round of the local Greyburn Cup men's basketball finals on December 5 when they beat the North Ringwood Hooters 47-37 to take the direct path to the grand final.

The Hooters, who won 12 of 14 games in the regular season, were shaping as the team to beat, having held sway over the Hitmen over the course of the season.

But in the semi-final it was the Hitmen who came to the fore, Doug Harding scorching the net for 24 points to take them to victory.

Graham Pollock (10) also found the hoop as the Hitmen turned a two-point lead with two minutes to go into the 10-point win.

Only Brad Dean (14, 13 in the first half) scored in double figures as the Hooters recorded their lowest score for the season—a performance which casts doubts over their ability to win a third premiership in four seasons.

They meet the local Fighting Irish in the preliminary final, the team they beat by three points in last season's corresponding game.

The Irish beat the Gotham City All-Stars 50-41 in their frantic elimination final, coming from 7-21 down early in the match.

Adam Borwick (17) and Brad Giampietro (15) dominated the scoring while Michael Eldridge (14) and Daniel Sharpe (nine) kept the All-Stars in touch.

The winners of the Hooters-Irish preliminary final meet the Hitmen in the grand final at Warrandyte High School stadium at 8.30pm on Wednesday, December 18.

In the Greyburn Cup's over-30 section, Andersons Creek sprang the surprise of the season by beating top-of-the-ladder Warrandyte 35-29 in

the semi-final to go straight into the big one.

Stan Slabon (11) and Jeff Woolcock (10) did the damage as Warrandyte relied far too heavily on Graham Pollock (15) and Scott Morison (13), who contributed all but one of their team's points.

The Dytes face a tough preliminary final encounter against the Plastics, who were too good for the River Rats, winning 33-20.

In the women's Grand Hotel Cup, the PP Champs won through to the final after a dramatic 40-39 win over the Sneakers in arguably the best women's basketball game seen in local competition.

The Sneakers led by one in the last minute before Vanessa Brady (18) scored on a three-point play to give the Champs the lead.

The Sneakers cut it back by one through Karina Reid (10) but the Champs, led by Amanda McLellan (14), hung on.

In the elimination final, the Chucks beat the Warrans 56-37.

The women's final will be played at 7pm on December 18, followed by the over-30 men's final and then the open-section game.

Meanwhile, Warrandyte Basketball Club's champion under-15 girls side fly out for Fiji on Sunday, December 15, to represent Australia in the South Pacific Junior Championships at the National Stadium in Suva.

The girls—Dionetta Arsenis, Jazmine Borella, Jacque Dick, Courtney Leigh, Alicia Ricato, Kim Swain and Lisa Troyahn—and coach Gavin Whitmore and manager Con Arsenis will be joined by two parents for what promises to be the trip of a lifetime.

The club have been fundraising heavily for the girls since news of the tournament was released earlier this year.

By CLINTON GRYPAS

Warrandyte Cricket Club's Chandler Shield eleven face a do-or-die match against arch rival Ainslie Park before Christmas.

With just one win from the first four games, the Bushrangers will remain in contention for a spot in the finals when play resumes after the New Year break or consign themselves to another season of battling to avoid relegation.

The crucial match will be played at Warrandyte Reserve on December 14 and 21.

Again the team's fragile batting line-up is letting down some lion-hearted work from the bowlers, who have become one of the more feared line-ups in the competition and have had the side in a winning position each match.

Team captain Tony Sturesteps had little to say after the latest disaster, in which Warrandyte lost 8/66 to be all out for 144 chasing Ferntree Gully's respectable but not impassable 202.

"It's the same old habits, poor shots which we just keep getting out on. It was very disappointing seeing we were only chasing 202," he said.

Nine of the 10 wickets fell to catches.

Opening paceman Chris Snaidero put the Dytes in a winning mood on the first day against last year's premiers when he snared 5/64.

It was his third haul of five wickets in an innings in the opening four games for a total of 23 wickets for just 289 runs at an average of just 12.6.

His continued spell of persistent bowling, following last year's award-winning performances, again raises the question of why he languished in the club's second eleven for so long prior to last season.

While he was excellent against Ferntree Gully, it was fellow quick Gerald Walshe who made the early breakthroughs, grabbing two wickets in the third over to have the Gully reeling at 2/1.

They never fully recovered, a 58-run partnership for the sixth wicket taking them from a dire 5/90 to 6/148 before Snaidero accepted a return catch to put the home team back on top.

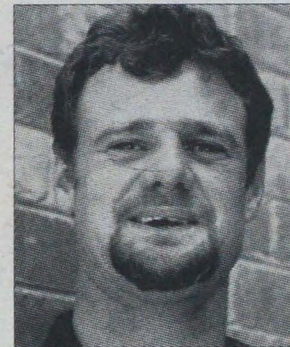
After dismissing the Gully, Warrandyte survived a "nuisance" two-over session at the end of the first day, scoring five runs and giving them 80 overs to make just 198 more the following week.

They erased 24 of them before Mick Canty edged one to the wicket-keeper to be out for 14, soon followed by Cam Day (15) with the score on 41.

Steve Bell and Greg Creber played a straight bat, Creber lasting 53 minutes for his five before also being caught behind.

Bell, batting consistently with scores of 10, 44 and 53 in his first three games, worked his way to 40 before rocketing a shot straight to a fielder for the fourth catch of the innings.

Ainslie Park showdown to make or break our season



Chris Snaidero: the batsmen are letting him down.



Tony Sturesteps: 'It's the same old habits.'

SPORT

At 4/94, Warrandyte needed 109 to win with 34 overs remaining.

With batting guns Chris Bambury and Sturesteps at the wicket the Bushrangers were still looking the goods, but both went cheaply—caught again—with the score on 115.

Brad Valentine didn't trouble the scorers while Dave Mooney made just four to send the Dytes tumbling from 4/115 to 8/121 and hopelessly out of touch.

The tail wagged very briefly, but when Snaidero was caught for 10 the team had tumbled to a 58-run defeat. The 18 extras was the second-highest score.

After the game, Bell described Warrandyte as a good team running very low on luck and cohesion.

"We have a good side but we're just not playing to our full potential," he said.

"We're still in with a finals chance, no question about that. We just all have to click on the one day."

"The entire team is fired up for the game against Ainslie Park. This is the one we have to win if we want to keep in the finals race."

The match should provide plenty of interest. It's no secret the two teams do not get on well, going back even before Ainslie Park "stole" a second-innings victory in the grand final in 1994. It was the start of a slide which Warrandyte have yet to turn around.

The team's hopes for this season were buoyed by the first win in the preceding game at Norwood, the scene of Snaidero's memorable 10-wicket haul last season.

The early going this time around after Norwood won the toss and batted bore a striking resemblance, Snaidero's figures at one stage reading 16 overs, 12 maidens, one wicket for eight. Again he was proving almost unplayable.

The home team eventually belted themselves out of a per-

ilous run-rate position (2/94 from 50 overs) to reach 8/201 at the end of 80.

Snaidero finished with 5/86 from a marathon 40 overs. He bowled unchanged from one end for the day's entire four hours and 40 minutes of play, broken only by a 20-minute tea break.

While the run chase started poorly (2/18 after 11 overs with Bambury and Canty both back in the pavilion cheaply) and

Russell Dorning (five) following soon after, Bell and Sturesteps put the team on track with a partnership of 75 (the season's best) for the fourth wicket.

Bell was run out for 53 while Sturesteps was eventually caught for 96, shortly after the Dytes had passed the total needed for victory. The skipper hit four sixes and seven boundaries in a stay at the crease of almost three hours.

Walshe (31) and Snaidero (13) enjoyed an unbeaten 39-run stand for the ninth wicket to take the score to 8/258 and a 57-run win.

The thirds are looming as Warrandyte's big improvers with some notable performances in the opening few rounds. Veteran Steve Pascoe is leading the side and recently took his seventh career hat-trick en route to 5/31 in a 32-run win over Norwood.

The fourths have been short on runs but still play exciting cricket, typified by their 85-all tie with Ferntree Gully. Elvis Curiale (6/35) and Ian Gray (4/45) carried the bowling load for the Dytes.

CRICKET DETAILS

FIRSTS: Warrandyte 205 (Bambury 55, Bell 44) lost to Mooroolbark 230 (Walshe 4/40, Snaidero 3/64) and 3/42 (Snaidero 3/6). Warrandyte 8/258 (Sturesteps 96, Bell 53, Walshe 31 n.o.) d Norwood 8/201 (Snaidero 5/86). Warrandyte 144 (Bell 40) lost to Ferntree Gully 202 (Snaidero 5/64) and 1/37.

SECONDS: Warrandyte 198 (Baker 56) and 2/78 lost to Mooroolbark 231 (Davis 5/88, Baker 4/52). Warrandyte 174 (Creber 53) lost to Norwood 239 (Davis 6/48) and 2/14. Warrandyte 5/213 (N. Brisbane 79, Gee 49) and 1/8 lost to

Ferntree Gully 219 (P. Baby 5/59). THIRDS: Warrandyte 8/217 (Brent 73, Revell 43) d Mooroolbark 180 (Summers 4/40, Pascoe 4/50). Warrandyte 9/231 (G. Brisbane 63, Goddard 47) and 4/37 d Norwood 199 (Pascoe 5/31 including hat-trick). Warrandyte 9/96 lost to Ferntree Gully 9/100.

FOURTHS: Warrandyte 239 (Sutherland 77) d Mooroolbark 108 (Gidley 4/25) and 3/102. Warrandyte 70 lost to Norwood 132 and 8/97. Warrandyte 85 tied Ferntree Gully 85 (Curiale 6/35, Gray 4/45).

Ben in touch with the best

Ben Gardiner, of Warrandyte, represented Victoria in the recent Australian Under-16 Touch Rugby Championships in Adelaide.

Victoria improved one place from the previous year to

finish sixth. They performed well against the strong New South Wales team and are confident of further improving their ranking next year.

Ben has also played junior basketball for Warrandyte.

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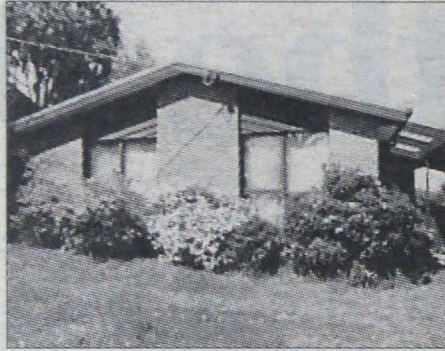


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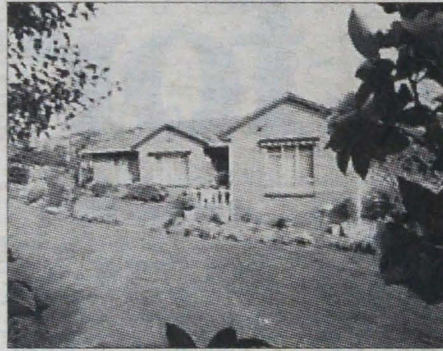
Wilson McDougall



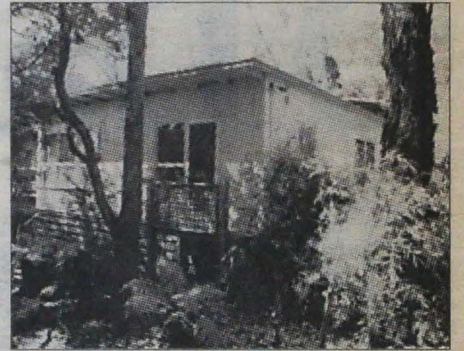
Elevated building block \$59,000



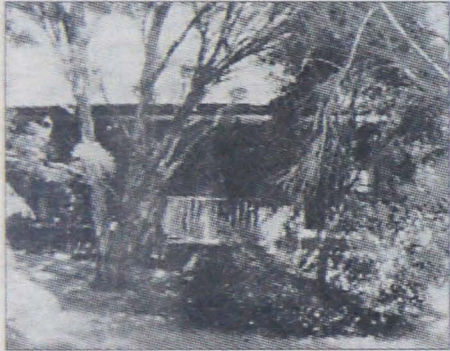
3 BR flat block \$129,000



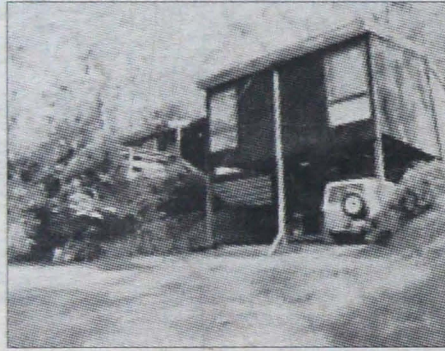
3BR, large family, double garage \$145,000



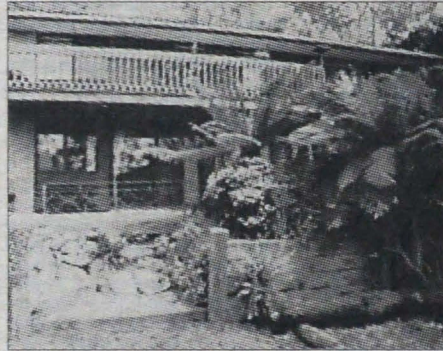
3BR, SC flat, double garage \$144,950



3BR, double garage \$145,000



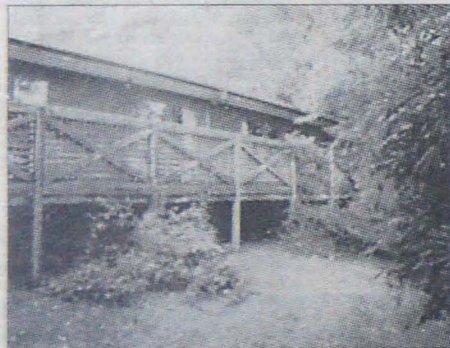
3 BRs, secluded 1/3 acre \$149,000



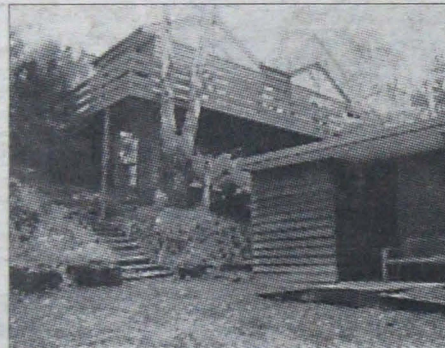
Open plan, 3BR, family room \$149,000



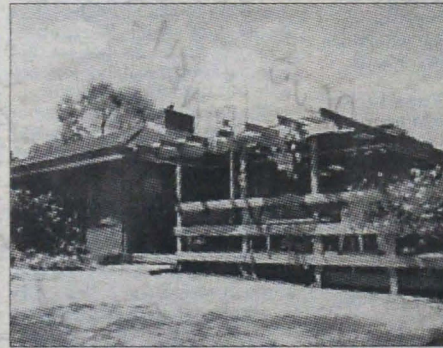
3BR, double garage, level block \$161,000



3BR, WRC plus huge studio \$169,000



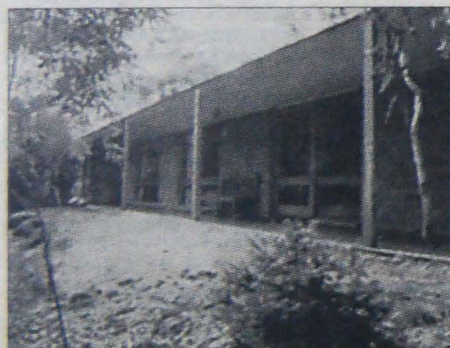
2 storey plus SC studio \$169,000



3BR plus study, near new \$179,000



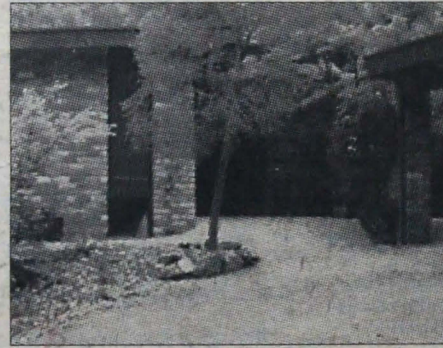
5BR, 1 acre, pony paddock \$189,000



3BR, study, IG pool, landscaped \$199,000



10.5 acres pasture land \$209,000



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